



Marc Dierikx and Sacha Zala (eds.)

# When the Wall Came Down

The Perception of German Reunification  
in International Diplomatic Documents  
1989–1990



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Edited by Marc Dierikx and Sacha Zala

with the collaboration of  
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The international network of Editors of Diplomatic Documents started informally in 1988. Delegations from different parts of the world met for the first time in London in 1989. Since then, the reunions have taken place every second year, in The Hague (1992), Ottawa (1994), Rome (1996), Bonn (1998), Washington (2001), Canberra (2003), Paris (2005), Dublin (2007), The Hague (2009), Jerusalem (2011), Geneva (2013), Washington (2015) and London (2017).

In 2019 the conference will take place in Berlin to mark the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

On October 3, 2013 at the Geneva Conference in the Palais des Nations the participants decided to institutionalise the international network which led to the foundation of the International Committee of Editors of Diplomatic Documents [ICEDD](#). Article 2 of the Charter states the objective of the organisation: «The International Committee shall bring together scholars with a common interest in the editing of contemporary diplomatic documents, enabling them to engage in a wider discussion and investigate common concerns, concepts, problems and methodologies over a diverse range of historical and historiographical areas.»

In order to strengthen the scholarly efforts and promote exchanges with the worldwide community of historians, ICEDD was accepted in 2017 as an Affiliated International Organisation of the International Committee of Historical Sciences [ICHS/CISH](#).

The 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall offered the opportunity to fruitfully use the worldwide network of the ICEDD members to launch a truly international collaboration to edit a selection of documents on the perceptions of the fall of the Berlin Wall from a number of different archives. We are thrilled to say that colleagues from eleven countries (Austria, Canada, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States) have accepted the invitation to participate. Their collective efforts are now being presented in this publication. The documents are accessible online as facsimiles in their original languages in the database Dodis. An English translation is provided in this publication as well as online. Leading in this collaborative project has been the research centre Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland (Dodis), which opened their resources and infrastructure to support this project. The editorial work was taken on by Marc Dierikx (The Netherlands) and Sacha Zala (Switzerland), supported by Franziska Ruchti (Switzerland). The Institut für Zeitgeschichte (München–Berlin) contributed financially to the publication of this book. To all of them goes a heartfelt thank you for their support.

- 8      May this first truly multinational cooperation enhance the importance of the International Committee of Editors of Diplomatic Documents' work and lead to further international exchanges and cooperative endeavors.

International Committee of Editors of Diplomatic Documents (ICEDD)

Dr. Ilse Dorothee Pautsch  
President

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Secretary General



This volume of the *Quaderni di Dodis* is the result of an international cooperation under the auspices of the *International Committee of Editors of Diplomatic Documents* (ICEDD). Editors and archivists from eleven countries – Austria, Canada, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States – agreed to take part to this project and submitted a selection of documents on their respective countries' perceptions of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German Reunification. For the purposes of this publication documents in languages other than English have been translated by the national editors. The documents are also available in their original languages as facsimiles in the freely accessible online database Dodis [www.dodis.ch](http://www.dodis.ch).

In this volume the documents are presented in a strictly chronological order. A table presents a brief summary of each document to facilitate its use. In general, the documents are published in their entirety. However, some documents contain passages unrelated to the focus of this volume and have therefore been left out by the national editors. These passages are always marked with [...] in the print version but the facsimile of the entire document can be consulted in the Dodis database in its original language.

In the footnotes editorial remarks are in *italics*, while quotes are in roman type. Within the text of a document, *italics* are used to indicate highlights in the original (e.g. underlining, etc.). Interventions made by the editors are in square brackets and in *italics*. Obvious spelling and punctuation mistakes have been corrected without indication, errors are commented on in a footnote. Additionally, the style of telegrams and telexes (e.g. capitalisation, the use of abbreviations, etc.) has been normalised in order to render them more reader friendly.

The heading for each document contains an editorial title, the classification and the urgency of that record (e.g. secret, urgent, etc.), the date and place of origin, as well as the permalink (e.g. [dodis.ch/53170](http://dodis.ch/53170)) pointing to the document's digital facsimile, the metadata and further linked digital resources. The original title of a document (non English titles have been translated) is in SMALL CAPS. The first footnote contains the type of the source, the archival reference and further relevant information. In the footnotes, further information about other documents and the people mentioned in the document can be found. Wherever possible, a link to the online database Dodis is provided (e.g. [dodis.ch/P31852](http://dodis.ch/P31852)), where the reader will find additional information.

The realisation of this volume would not have been possible without the magnificent efforts of the team at the research centre Diplomatic Documents of Switzerland (Dodis) and the financial support of the Institut für Zeitgeschichte

- 10 (München–Berlin). Last but not least, our heartfelt thanks go to our international colleagues. Without their hard work and support this pioneering and truly international publication would not have been possible.

Marc Dierikx and Sacha Zala

Four years after the end of hostilities in 1945, two new German states emerged from the rubble of the Third Reich and the developing Cold War. On 23 May 1949 the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was founded in the zones occupied by American, British and French troops. It was followed on 7 October 1949 by a German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the Soviet-occupied zone. Although neither German republic was fully sovereign at the foundation, this development effectively split Germany and appeared to solidify military and political realities. Nonetheless, in the preamble of its *Grundgesetz* of 23 May 1949 the FRG laid out its mission to unite the German people as a whole. Following this train of thought, the *Grundgesetz* delineated inner-German relations as affairs between two political representations of a single people.

Fomented by the competition of the two blocks, on 25 March 1954 the USSR declared the GDR a sovereign state, a resolution that was reconfirmed on 20 September 1955. Far-reaching sovereignty was bestowed upon the FRG in the Paris Accord that came into force on 5 May 1955 and the FRG became a member of NATO. However, this cemented the FRG's and GDR's inclusion in opposing military alliances and international politics dictated that the GDR was not recognized by the Western allies. Moreover, 1955 also saw the birth of the "Hallstein Doctrine" in which the FRG declared that any recognition of the GDR and initiation of diplomatic relations with East Berlin by third countries would be regarded as an unfriendly act – the exception being the Soviet Union. Western countries consequently instructed their diplomats to be wary of a silent but *de facto* recognition of the GDR through contacts with GDR officials. The GDR tried to circumvent this diplomatic isolation through surreptitious attempts to attain some form of recognition through trade agreements with Western countries.

Indeed, the period after 1955 saw a gradual expansion of trading contacts between Western countries and the GDR. A serious setback in such contacts was presented by the construction of the Berlin Wall, however. On 12 August 1961, the GDR Council of Ministers announced that "to put a stop to the hostile activity of West Germany's and West Berlin's revanchist and militaristic forces, border controls of the kind generally found in every sovereign state will be set up". In the early morning hours of 13 August 1961 the first barriers were erected and these were subsequently extended to form the famous Berlin Wall. Thereafter, the Wall became the visible symbol of the rift between East and West.

Throughout the 1960s contacts between East and West remained cautious in nature. In 1968 the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia acted as a forceful

eye opener for the divisions solidified by the Wall. It also served as a starting point for a re-evaluation of mutual security interests. A milestone in this respect was Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*. Brandt had become the FRG Minister of Foreign Affairs on 1 December 1966. He set a new course with regard to the GDR that aimed at improved relations. Brandt also strengthened relations with Moscow. After he became *Bundeskanzler* in October 1969 he pursued his *Ostpolitik* with vigor. Relations between East and West improved. The FRG formally recognized the GDR in 1972, opening up the road to expanded contacts not just between the two German states but also between the GDR and the West. The former was confirmed in the underlying Basic Treaty between the FRG and GDR, signed 21 December 1972. This defined inner-German relations as expressions of a *gesamt-deutsche* state with a single people. The enhanced relationship between East and West was evidenced by the recognition of the GDR by Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Australia and Belgium between 7 and 28 December 1972. A further batch of 11 recognitions followed in January and February 1973. Relations between the West and the GDR normalized, despite continued Western criticism with regard to the Berlin Wall and signs of internal repression. Nonetheless, on 1 August 1975 in Helsinki the participating nations in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe agreed to refrain from any intervention, direct or indirect, individual or collective, in the internal or external affairs falling within the domestic jurisdiction of another participating State, regardless of their mutual relations.

Changes came about in 1989. Soviet support for the GDR had been on the decline since 1981 because of economic problems in the USSR. This development accentuated the economic difficulties encountered within the GDR. From 1985 onward, Soviet party leader Mikhail Gorbachev steered a new course with his politics of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Nonetheless, Erich Honecker celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GDR in the Berlin *Palast der Republik* with East European allies on 7 October 1989 as if the GDR was immune to developments that had been in the air throughout Eastern Europe for months. Four days earlier he had closed the borders of the GDR.

This measure was in response to a series of events that began to unfold in May 1989. On 2 May Hungary, which had adopted a process of political reforms in the previous months, opened its border with Austria. GDR-citizens were among those who tried to leave their country via this route. Initially, they ran the risk of being returned by unpredictable Hungarian border guards, but in the night of 10 to 11 September the border was completely opened. By then thousands of GDR citizens had already left the country, heading West or seeking refuge in West German embassies in Budapest, Warsaw and Prague. In the embassies' host countries these events created political problems. In Warsaw the Polish government wished to avoid upsetting relations with either German state and hoped for a friendly solution that would allow refugees to leave (doc. 1)<sup>1</sup>. Nonetheless, critical observers in the Austrian diplomatic service predicted that the refugee crisis might well

<sup>1</sup> Draft memo by the Director of the 4<sup>th</sup> Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Janusz Fekecz, 14 September 1989, [dodis.ch/53168](https://dodis.ch/53168).

13 loose the specter of German reunification upon Europe in the foreseeable future (doc. 2)<sup>2</sup>.

To a casual observer, all appeared calm in the GDR as the official celebrations went ahead on 7 October. Yet on the nearby Alexanderplatz thousands gathered, carrying slogans that demanded more freedom. Just two days later more than seventy thousand people demonstrated against the regime in Leipzig. Reforms appeared inevitable. Two weeks later, GDR party leader Erich Honecker resigned on 18 October 1989 to be replaced by Egon Krenz, who had long been Honecker's crown prince. The domestic political organization of the GDR showed increasing signs of disintegration. The dissatisfaction of the population that had largely remained under the surface erupted; new groupings and political parties posed varying demands. The Israeli Foreign Service reported an atmosphere of change and strong expectations among the public (doc. 3)<sup>3</sup>. On 4 November some 500,000 people demonstrated against the regime in Berlin under the illustrious slogan "Wir sind das Volk".

Then, on 9 November 1989, the unexpected happened. After months of crisis, with tens of thousands of citizens fleeing the country through various means and routes, the GDR government suddenly announced that it would open up the border crossings for travel to West Berlin, which the GDR emissaries officially communicated the next day.<sup>4</sup> The opening of the Berlin Wall unleashed the torrent. The Dutch ambassador wrote of a re-evaluation of all values (doc. 4)<sup>5</sup>. West German diplomacy was in turmoil (doc. 5)<sup>6</sup>. While the Americans considered whether this warranted an expansion of relations with the GDR (doc. 6)<sup>7</sup>, British diplomats primarily observed the ongoing developments with wonder (doc. 7)<sup>8</sup>. US President George Bush spoke to Helmut Kohl on the telephone about the situation (doc. 8)<sup>9</sup>. Diplomats struggled to keep up with events as they unfolded (doc. 9)<sup>10</sup>. As a consequence of this sudden *Wende* the GDR found itself in a political vacuum. The first diplomatic reports mentioned the (still undefined) prospect of a development towards a possible reunification (doc. 10–12)<sup>11</sup>, which might well

2 Memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 September 1989, [dodis.ch/52927](https://dodis.ch/52927).

3 Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, 10 October 1989, [dodis.ch/52942](https://dodis.ch/52942).

4 Information from the GDR Government, 27 November 1990, [dodis.ch/52350](https://dodis.ch/52350).

5 Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, 8 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52957](https://dodis.ch/52957).

6 Extract from the Diary of the Protocol Officer at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw, Rüdiger Freiherr von Fritsch, 9–10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52948](https://dodis.ch/52948).

7 Information Memorandum for the United States Secretary of State, James A. Baker, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52915](https://dodis.ch/52915).

8 Telegram from the British Commandant in Berlin, Robert Corbett, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52922](https://dodis.ch/52922).

9 Memorandum by the United States' Deputy National Security Advisor, Robert M. Gates, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52911](https://dodis.ch/52911).

10 Telegram from the Polish Ambassador in East Berlin, Janusz Obodowski, to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/53169](https://dodis.ch/53169).

11 Circular by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52928](https://dodis.ch/52928); telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 11 November 1989, [dodis.ch/53320](https://dodis.ch/53320); telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in Bonn, Reşat Arim, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 11 November 1989, [dodis.ch/53321](https://dodis.ch/53321).

14 lead to a new chapter in Germany's post war history (doc. 13–18)<sup>12</sup>, despite short term concerns about the “politically intoxicating jamboree” they were witnessing (doc. 19–21)<sup>13</sup>. In the turmoil, Krenz gave way to Hans Modrow as Prime Minister in November – a move Modrow himself thought of as delayed beyond any comprehensible extent (doc. 24)<sup>14</sup>. Meanwhile, the Americans focused on the meaning of German developments for Moscow (doc. 22)<sup>15</sup> as diplomats identified reunification as more of a distinct possibility (doc. 23, doc. 25)<sup>16</sup>. The clause in the GDR constitution specifying the leading role of the SED party was deleted in East Berlin and a round table discussion between government and opposition took place on 7 December. Its first important outcome was to set a date for free elections. Only the Israelis appeared to be out of tune, contemplating the possibility of GDR-Israeli diplomatic relations and the continued existence of the East German state (doc. 26)<sup>17</sup>. Meanwhile the SED was steadily losing power, manifested as internal struggles and significant losses of membership. In the streets, the call for German unity became stronger. In Leipzig there were now weekly demonstrations.

If at the beginning of November the idea of reunification was anathema to the GDR leadership, it was rather different in the FRG, where the constitution had from the beginning signaled the intention to “fulfill the unity and freedom of Germany by virtue of its right to free self-determination”. To help promote this idea, Chancellor Helmut Kohl offered the GDR far-reaching economic aid in his annual Bundestag speech “Zur Lage der Nation”. Across the Wall, a statement by Modrow in mid-November assumed that the two German states would develop a friendly and close relationship. It later transpired that Modrow aimed for a *Vertragsgemeinschaft* of the two states. Internationally, the thinking about a Europe with a united Germany was also in full swing.

12 Telegram from the British Ambassador in East Berlin, Nigel Broomfield, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd, 13 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52923](https://dodis.ch/52923); memo by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, 13 November 1989, [dodis.ch/49548](https://dodis.ch/49548); telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, 14 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52958](https://dodis.ch/52958); memo for the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, René Felber, 14 November 1989, [dodis.ch/49563](https://dodis.ch/49563); minutes of conversation by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 14 November 1989, [dodis.ch/53170](https://dodis.ch/53170); telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, 14 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52943](https://dodis.ch/52943).

13 Telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs, 15 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52937](https://dodis.ch/52937); minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on 15 November 1989 at 9.30 a.m., 15 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52918](https://dodis.ch/52918); memo for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, 16 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52949](https://dodis.ch/52949).

14 Memorandum of conversation by the Austrian Federal Chancellery, 2 December 1989, [dodis.ch/52929](https://dodis.ch/52929).

15 Memorandum for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush, 29 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52912](https://dodis.ch/52912).

16 Telegram from the Polish Ambassador in Cologne, Ryszard Karski, to the Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bolesław Kułski, 29 November 1989, [dodis.ch/53171](https://dodis.ch/53171); telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs, 6 December 1989, [dodis.ch/52938](https://dodis.ch/52938).

17 Letter from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin, to the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav, 17 December 1989, [dodis.ch/52944](https://dodis.ch/52944).

With the introduction of a Ten Points Program on 28 November 1989, Kohl sought to offer GDR citizens a perspective for unity. Key to his Ten Points was that the FRG would financially support the unification process, provided that free elections would be held and economic reforms could take place. An important reason behind this was the need to do something about the ongoing mass emigration from the GDR. A total of some 350,000 people left the GDR in 1989 – about two per cent of the population.

The initial reaction from East Berlin to Kohl's Ten Points was that he had bypassed reality and neglected the sovereignty of the GDR. In his own proposals, Modrow mainly referred to the possibility of a *Vertragsgemeinschaft* for cooperation in areas like disarmament and security. The GDR opposition parties on the political left also dismissed the proposals, reasoning that they were in effect putting the GDR on sale. Even in various West European capitals, Kohl's speech was noted with some discomfort.

From Moscow, Soviet Secretary-General Gorbachev warned against any acceleration of the process, stressing the need to reach agreement on two vital border issues: the internal German border, and the external borders. Any attempt to change the latter and "modify reality" in Europe was deemed unacceptable. At the European summit in Strasbourg on 9 December 1989, the European heads of government stated that they would seek a peaceful state of affairs in Central and Eastern Europe. This was seen as conditional on German self-determination. Nonetheless, it proved difficult to agree on a common approach. To mollify his critics, Kohl stated that "the German architecture is directly embedded in European architecture". He felt supported by Washington, where President Bush did not think he should slow down. Meanwhile, in Bonn the Foreign Ministry fretted about the reactions of two of Germany's European partners, France and Italy, to this course of developments (doc. 27–28)<sup>18</sup>. There were also reservations in London, where diplomats called for an opportunity to try and put a more positive spin on the British position (doc. 29)<sup>19</sup>.

On 19 and 20 December Kohl visited the GDR for the first time after the *Wende*. In Dresden he was welcomed by a large crowd calling for freedom and unity. Meanwhile, GDR Prime Minister Hans Modrow continued to promote his idea of a *Vertragsgemeinschaft* between the two German states. Kohl was opposed to this approach, stating that in such a case the East German requests for more financial assistance could not be met. In Washington there was growing concern regarding the possible impact of German developments on the stability in Europe, although Kohl tried to alleviate these concerns (doc. 30)<sup>20</sup>. The same apprehensions also featured in bilateral Austrian-GDR contacts (doc. 31)<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Telegram from the Ambassador of the FRG in Paris, Franz Pfeffer, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG, 18 December 1989, [dodis.ch/52953](https://dodis.ch/52953); memo for the State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the FRG, Jürgen Sudhoff, 18 December 1989, [dodis.ch/52950](https://dodis.ch/52950).

<sup>19</sup> Telegram from the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd, 5 January 1990, [dodis.ch/52925](https://dodis.ch/52925).

<sup>20</sup> Memorandum by the United States National Security Council, 26 January 1990, [dodis.ch/52913](https://dodis.ch/52913).

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum of conversation by the Austrian Foreign Ministry, 30 January 1990, [dodis.ch/52931](https://dodis.ch/52931).



In January 1990 the domestic political situation in the GDR became increasingly unstable. Allegations that the East German government was seeking to re-establish the infamous *Stasi*, the secret state security organization, contributed to the suspension of Round Table Talks on the political future of the country. A new GDR government was formed at the end of January and the first decision of the new cabinet was to advance the date of the election to 18 March. Under pressure, Modrow felt compelled to visit Moscow at the end of January and speak out in favor of a single German homeland (*Deutschland einig Vaterland*). On 1 February, Modrow put forward a plan to achieve this, suggesting that the FRG and GDR should draw up an agreement, which, through the formation of a confederation, would lead to a German unitary state.

In Modrow's thinking, a condition for this would be military neutrality. This was a demand that had been repeatedly made by Moscow. However, the reactions in the FRG to the latest proposals were almost without exception negative. Faced with a storm of criticism, Modrow played down his plan. In Bonn, Kohl again stressed that a neutralized Germany would be an isolated Germany, an outcome that would benefit no one in Europe.

Although Mikhail Gorbachev supported the principle of German self-determination (doc. 32)<sup>22</sup> the Soviet Union denounced Kohl's initial plans. Moscow made it conditional that the FRG would formally waive any aspirations towards a restoration of Germany's 1937 borders and accept a framework of a "Common European House". The Poles, sharing a long border with Germany, also had serious reservations (doc. 33)<sup>23</sup>. On Germany's western border, defense concerns also had the upper hand (doc. 34)<sup>24</sup>. While in Washington US President George Bush remained supportive of Kohl's ambitions (doc. 35)<sup>25</sup>, French President François Mitterrand and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were less encouraging. Both were concerned that German unification would not be in the best interest of stable European relations. With an eye on the past, they also feared a large and powerful Germany. General public opinion in Western Europe, however, was more moderate.

The West German Federal Government decided on 7 February 1990 to take the increasing economic crisis in the GDR as grounds for immediate discussions with the GDR on the formation of a monetary union. At the same time, it was decided to set up an inter-ministerial committee that would prepare for unity, with Kohl at the head. The GDR reaction to these proposals was lukewarm. At the same time the EC partners expressed concern that a German monetary union would slow down the ongoing process of Economic and Monetary Union within the EC framework. In response, Bonn issued assurances that the Federal Republic would not delay its progress.

<sup>22</sup> Memo for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, 31 January 1990, [dodis.ch/52951](https://dodis.ch/52951).

<sup>23</sup> Circular telegram by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, 1 February 1990, [dodis.ch/53172](https://dodis.ch/53172).

<sup>24</sup> Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, 8 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52960](https://dodis.ch/52960).

<sup>25</sup> Draft letter from the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush, to the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Helmut Kohl, 9 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52914](https://dodis.ch/52914).



While these developments were being discussed, support for reunification remained high in the GDR. During a visit by Kohl and Genscher to Moscow, on 10 and 11 February, Gorbachev accepted the principle of reunification of the two German states and said he was now prepared to negotiate an agreement on this. It cleared the way for talks with GDR Prime Minister Modrow. Kohl predicted that unification would occur before the year was out. Now that the Soviet Union had given a “green light” the only question that remained was when and in what form unity would come. The governments of the FRG and the GDR were expected to begin negotiations as soon as possible but when Kohl received his colleague Modrow in Bonn on 13 February he found that the latter had not received a mandate to go ahead with plans for a monetary union. At the meeting it was therefore decided not to go beyond the formation of a committee of experts to discuss the details of a monetary union. Also on the table was a GDR request for an emergency aid program of about DM 15 billion from the FRG.

The consensus was that discussions on German unification should take place in the context of the Six: namely the FRG, the GDR and the four Allied ex-occupation powers. An agreement based on this consultation was to be submitted at the CSCE summit, scheduled to take place in Paris in November. The pace of developments quickened. The Swiss Ambassador in Bonn analyzed the historical processes taking place, rejecting firmly the idea that a united Germany could be neutral but considering it “unrealistic” that the GDR would become part of NATO, since it would be “unconscionable and unacceptable to the USSR” (doc. 36)<sup>26</sup>. On the same day, the 13 February, a secret informal conference took place in Ottawa, Canada, arranged by the West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and attended by his American counterpart James Baker and the British and French Foreign Secretaries Douglas Hurd and Roland Dumas. A draft for a Two-Plus-Four Agreement on German unity was worked out and discussed later that day with the Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze and approved by Gorbachev (doc. 37)<sup>27</sup>.

How to prepare for the Two Plus Four meeting and promote a solution to the issue of the future security in Europe that would be acceptable to all parties became central for US thinking (doc. 38)<sup>28</sup>. Similar concerns – assurances that no “Fourth Reich” would ever emerge – were prominent in Israeli circles (doc. 39–40)<sup>29</sup>, but Western diplomats generally were optimistic that a solution would be found (doc. 41)<sup>30</sup>. This view was shared by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze

<sup>26</sup> Political report of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl, 13 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52281](https://dodis.ch/52281).

<sup>27</sup> Telegram from the Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, de Montigny Marchand, 15 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52939](https://dodis.ch/52939).

<sup>28</sup> Memorandum for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush, 19 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52917](https://dodis.ch/52917).

<sup>29</sup> Telegram from the Israeli ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, 20 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52945](https://dodis.ch/52945); telegram from the Ambassador of the FRG in Tel Aviv, Wilhelm Haas, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG, 20 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52952](https://dodis.ch/52952).

<sup>30</sup> Telegram from the Canadian Department of External Affairs to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, 21 February 1990, [dodis.ch/52940](https://dodis.ch/52940).

(doc. 42)<sup>31</sup>, although the Soviets remained wary of the possible consequences of agreeing to the new Germany (doc. 43)<sup>32</sup>.

On 18 March 1990, the GDR had its first free elections. With 48% of the votes, the East German CDU supported by the CDU/CSU in the west, was the big winner. The East German CDU spoke out for rapid German unification. The outcome of the elections did not, however, alleviate concerns in neighboring countries about a possible upsurge of German nationalism that might arise from unification (doc. 44)<sup>33</sup>, even though the Israelis appeared convinced this would not come to pass (doc. 45)<sup>34</sup>.

Although the Soviet Union declared in March 1990 that a united Germany as a member of NATO would not be acceptable, a point of view repeated by Shevardnadze a month later (doc. 47)<sup>35</sup>, Western diplomatic opinion held that such a membership would be beneficial to European stability (doc. 48)<sup>36</sup>. This was, however, not the only concern. In Switzerland GDR diplomats still acted as if all things were normal (doc. 46)<sup>37</sup>, but in Warsaw there was apprehension about future bilateral relations and about possible civil law consequences of the new Germany, particularly claims by German citizens on possessions lost around the end of the war (doc. 49)<sup>38</sup>. Operating with a wider perspective, Turkish diplomats were more inclined to take developments at face value (doc. 50–53)<sup>39</sup>. Meanwhile the economic, monetary and social union of the two German states came into effect on 1 July 1990. In Paris, a Two-Plus-Four agreement was reached on the German-Polish border. Dutch and Austrian reports soon accepted the new realities (doc. 54, doc. 56)<sup>40</sup>. By mid-July 1990 only the Israelis appeared convinced that the GDR would remain as a separate entity (doc. 55)<sup>41</sup>.

To the surprise of some observers, the Soviet objection to NATO membership for a united Germany was removed at a further summit between Gorbachev and

31 Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnadze, 17 March 1990, [dodis.ch/53316](https://dodis.ch/53316).

32 Memo by the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in East Berlin, Vyacheslav Kochemasov, 29 March 1990, [dodis.ch/53317](https://dodis.ch/53317).

33 Political Report of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl, 10 April 1990, [dodis.ch/52282](https://dodis.ch/52282).

34 Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, 16 April 1990, [dodis.ch/52946](https://dodis.ch/52946).

35 Interview by the Irish Times with the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnadze, 26 April 1990, [dodis.ch/53318](https://dodis.ch/53318).

36 Guidance Telegram of the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd to the British Representatives Overseas, 23 May 1990, [dodis.ch/52920](https://dodis.ch/52920).

37 Memo by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, 18 April 1990, [dodis.ch/49550](https://dodis.ch/49550).

38 Memo by the Polish Military Mission in West Berlin, 28 May 1990, [dodis.ch/53173](https://dodis.ch/53173).

39 Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 13 June 1990, [dodis.ch/53322](https://dodis.ch/53322); telegram of the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18 June 1990, [dodis.ch/53323](https://dodis.ch/53323); political report of the Turkish Consul General in Berlin, Akın Emregül, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21 June 1990, [dodis.ch/53324](https://dodis.ch/53324); telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 June 1990, [dodis.ch/53325](https://dodis.ch/53325).

40 Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, 4 July 1990, [dodis.ch/52961](https://dodis.ch/52961); memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18 July 1990, [dodis.ch/52930](https://dodis.ch/52930).

41 Memorandum from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin, to the Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav, 10 July 1990, [dodis.ch/52947](https://dodis.ch/52947).

- 19 Kohl in Arkhyz in the Caucasus on 16 July 1990 (doc. 57–58)<sup>42</sup>. In exchange for a substantial German financial and economic support package to the Soviet Union, Gorbachev dropped his objections. This made it possible for the Soviet Union to agree to a final international legal settlement with Germany that would become a cornerstone for the process of German unification (doc. 59)<sup>43</sup>. This left the remaining issues to be resolved in Bonn and in Berlin, a process that was, again, witnessed with apprehension in the neighboring European capitals, where only the British participated in the *End Game* (doc 60–63)<sup>44</sup>. This effort culminated in the Day of German Unity (*Tag der Deutschen Einheit*) on 3 October 1990.

Marc Dierikx and Sacha Zala

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<sup>42</sup> Memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 19 July 1990, [dodis.ch/52932](https://dodis.ch/52932); telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs, 23 July 1990, [dodis.ch/52941](https://dodis.ch/52941).

<sup>43</sup> Memo for the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnaze, 6 August 1990, [dodis.ch/53319](https://dodis.ch/53319).

<sup>44</sup> Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, 9 August 1990, [dodis.ch/52963](https://dodis.ch/52963); letter from the Deputy Undersecretary of State (Defense) of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, John Weston, to the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby, 17 September 1990, [dodis.ch/52919](https://dodis.ch/52919); political report of the Swiss Ambassador in East Berlin, Franz Birrer, 2 October 1990, [dodis.ch/49561](https://dodis.ch/49561); memo by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, 11 November 1990, [dodis.ch/53174](https://dodis.ch/53174).



**List of Abbreviations**

ADN	Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst (General German News Service)
AL	Alternative Liste für Umweltschutz (Alternative List for environmental protection)
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BMG	British Military Government
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CFE	(Treaty on) Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
CFM	Council of Foreign Ministers
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSBM	Confidence and Security Building Measures
CSCE /CSE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
CSSR	Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union in Bavaria)
DA	Demokratischer Aufbruch (Democratic Awakening)
DBP	Demokratische Bauernpartei Deutschlands (Democratic Farmers' Party of Germany)
DC	Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democracy)
DKP	Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (German Communist Party)
DM	Deutsche Mark
DSU	Deutsche Soziale Union (German Social Union)
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Area
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office (of the United Kingdom)
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
FOFA	Follow-On Forces Attack
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	German Democratic Republic
HFA	Helsinki Final Act of 1 August 1975
HM	Her Majesty
LDPD	Liberal-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (Liberal Democratic Party of Germany)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MFN	Most favored nation

22	NAC	North Atlantic Council
	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
	NDPD	National-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (National-Democratic Party of Germany)
	N+N	Neutral and Non-Aligned Countries
	NSC	National Security Council
	NVA	Nationale Volksarmee (National People's Army)
	NY	New York
	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
	ORF	Österreichischer Rundfunk (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation)
	PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)
	PCO	Privy Council Office
	PM	Prime minister
	PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism)
	PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano (Italian Socialist Party)
	SCC	Soviet Control Commission
	SDP	Sozialdemokratische Partei der DDR (Social Democratic Party in the GDR)
	SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
	SEW	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Westberlins (Socialist Unity Party of West Berlin)
	SMAG	Soviet Military Administration in Germany
	SNF	Short-Range Nuclear Forces / Substrategic Nuclear Forces
	SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschland (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
	SSEA	Secretary of State of External Affairs (Canada)
	START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
	STASI	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security of the GDR)
	TGV	Train à grande vitesse (high-speed train)
	TV	Television
	UN	United Nations
	UK	United Kingdom
	US	United States
	USA	United States of America
	USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	WEU	Western European Union
	WGT	Western Group of Troops
	WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organization
	WW II	World War II

**1 Poland**

14.9.1989 | [dodis.ch/53168](https://dodis.ch/53168)

**Draft memo by the Director of the 4<sup>th</sup> Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Janusz Fekecz**

Information concerning Polish-West German talks about over 50 East German citizens staying at the West German Embassy in Warsaw. How possible solutions could impact Poland's relations with the GDR and the FRG are discussed.

**2 Austria**

19.9.1989 | [dodis.ch/52927](https://dodis.ch/52927)

**Memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

In September 1989, a farsighted diplomat at the Austrian foreign ministry wrote an extensive analysis in which he concluded that the issue of German "reunification" would very well be a defining issue in international politics in the coming years, thus challenging the predominant view.

**3 Israel**

27.10.1989 | [dodis.ch/52942](https://dodis.ch/52942)

**Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry**

Report on a discussion with Wolfgang Mischnick of the FDP on his impressions of a visit to East Berlin; Israel's concerns are voiced.

**4 Netherlands**

8.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52957](https://dodis.ch/52957)

**Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek**

Observations on the political situation and internal developments in the GDR in the days prior to the opening of the Wall.

**5 Federal Republic of Germany**

9.-10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52948](https://dodis.ch/52948)

**Extract from the Diary of the Protocol Officer at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw, Rüdiger Freiherr von Fritsch**

Description of Helmut Kohl's visit to Warsaw on 9 and 10 November 1989, which was interrupted by the Chancellor's spontaneous return to Bonn after the GDR had opened the inner German border.

## **6 United States**

10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52915](https://dodis.ch/52915)

**Information Memorandum for the United States Secretary of State, James A. Baker**  
Preliminary assessment of the implications of the dramatic events in East Berlin for US policy in Europe.

## **7 United Kingdom**

10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52922](https://dodis.ch/52922)

**Telegram from the British Commandant in Berlin, Robert Corbett, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd**  
Description of a “historic night” of free travel between East and West Berlin.

## **8 United States**

10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52911](https://dodis.ch/52911)

**Memorandum by the United States’ Deputy National Security Advisor, Robert M. Gates**

During the telephone call with President Bush, Chancellor Kohl reported on his trip to Poland and the situation in East Germany after the Berlin Wall was first breached the previous day.

## **9 Poland**

10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/53169](https://dodis.ch/53169)

**Telegram from the Polish Ambassador in East Berlin, Janusz Obodowski, to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski**  
Report on the fall of the Berlin Wall and mass crossings by East German citizens into West Berlin.

## **10 Austria**

10.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52928](https://dodis.ch/52928)

**Circular by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The day after the accidental opening of the Berlin Wall, the Austrian Foreign Ministry saw itself compelled to provide its diplomats with basic information on the German question and a language regime on Austria’s attitude to the issue of “re-unification.”

## **11 Turkey**

11.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/53320](https://dodis.ch/53320)

**Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

News obtained from local and Western press on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of November regarding the fall of the Berlin Wall.



25

## **12 Turkey**

11.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/53321](https://dodis.ch/53321)

**Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in Bonn, Reşat Arim, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Summary of the press statement made by Chancellor Kohl following his visit to Berlin, concerning the developments in GDR.

## **13 United Kingdom**

13.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52923](https://dodis.ch/52923)

**Telegram from the British Ambassador in East Berlin, Nigel Broomfield, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd**

Reflections on political life in the GDR in the immediate aftermath of the opening of the Berlin Wall.

## **14 Switzerland**

13.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/49548](https://dodis.ch/49548)

**Memo by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs**

Following the announcement of the new travel regulations for GDR citizens, Switzerland's future visa policy towards the GDR is discussed among other things with GDR representative Tschierlich.

## **15 Netherlands**

14.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52958](https://dodis.ch/52958)

**Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek**

Report on the events that unfolded on and after 9.11.1989. Van der Tas is critical of the "false note", the claim for reunification, brought into the festivities by FRG Chancellor Kohl.

## **16 Switzerland**

14.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/49563](https://dodis.ch/49563)

**Memo for the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, René Felber**

Information and assessments on questions for an upcoming press conference on the events in Berlin containing answers to assess the situation from a Swiss perspective are provided.

## **17 Poland**

14.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/53170](https://dodis.ch/53170)

**Minutes of conversation by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

During the conversation between Foreign Minister Skubiszewski and Chancellor Kohl the latter's decision to interrupt his visit to Poland and the impact of the fall of the Berlin Wall on Polish-West German relations were discussed.

26

## **18 Israel**

14.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52943](https://dodis.ch/52943)

### **Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry**

In preparation for a parliamentary debate, the Ambassador suggests that warnings of a wave of dangerous nationalism in Germany may be exaggerated.

## **19 Canada**

15.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52937](https://dodis.ch/52937)

### **Telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs**

Observations on the mood in East Berlin in the immediate aftermath of the opening of the Berlin Wall.

## **20 United Kingdom**

15.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52918](https://dodis.ch/52918)

### **Minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on 15 November 1989 at 9.30 a.m.**

The events in the GDR were discussed.

## **21 Federal Republic of Germany**

16.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52949](https://dodis.ch/52949)

### **Memo for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher**

Information about the reaction of the US administration, the media and the public to the recent events in Berlin and the GDR, mentioning President Bush's rather subdued statement on 9 November, which is attributed to the administration's focus on preserving stability and unity in NATO.

## **22 United States**

29.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/52912](https://dodis.ch/52912)

### **Memorandum for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush**

In response to the President's request, an analysis of how recent events in Eastern Europe would impact Soviet policy in Germany.

## **23 Poland**

29.11.1989 | [dodis.ch/53171](https://dodis.ch/53171)

### **Telegram from the Polish Ambassador in Cologne, Ryszard Karski, to the Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bolesław Kulski**

The ten-point plan for German reunification is assessed and the lack of any information about the inviolability of the Polish-German border is criticised.

27

## 24 Austria

2.12.1989 | [dodis.ch/52929](https://dodis.ch/52929)

### **Memorandum of conversation by the Austrian Federal Chancellery**

Only two weeks after the accidental opening of the Berlin Wall, Austrian Chancellor Vranitzky paid a visit to the GDR. Prime Minister Modrow informed him about the current situation in East Germany. Both heads of government touched upon the issue of "reunification."

## 25 Canada

6.12.1989 | [dodis.ch/52938](https://dodis.ch/52938)

### **Telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs**

Observations on how popular support for reunification is pushing the pace faster than anyone anticipated.

## 26 Israel

17.12.1989 | [dodis.ch/52944](https://dodis.ch/52944)

### **Letter from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin, to the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav**

East German overtures towards Israel, including public statements in press interviews. Govrin believes that the GDR sees Israel and world Jewry as potential allies against plans for German reunification.

## 27 Federal Republic of Germany

18.12.1989 | [dodis.ch/52953](https://dodis.ch/52953)

### **Telegram from the Ambassador of the FRG in Paris, Franz Pfeffer, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG**

Information about different reactions in France to the fall of the Berlin Wall and recent developments in the GDR. While sympathy prevails among the population, the political class and the media are concerned. The necessity of good public relations work by the Embassy of the FRG is emphasised.

## 28 Federal Republic of Germany

18.12.1989 | [dodis.ch/52950](https://dodis.ch/52950)

### **Memo for the State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the FRG, Jürgen Sudhoff**

Report on the Italian government's cool reaction to events in Germany with reference to Andreotti's critical remarks. It is explained that Italy attaches great importance to stability in Europe as well as to the progress of European integration and the CSCE process.

## 29 United Kingdom

5.1.1990 | [dodis.ch/52925](https://dodis.ch/52925)

### **Telegram from the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd**

Concern at the perception of the UK attitude towards German unity is expressed.

### **30 United States**

26.1.1990 | [dodis.ch/52913](https://dodis.ch/52913)

#### **Memorandum by the United States National Security Council**

President Bush and Chancellor Kohl discussed proposals for the conventional force reduction talks in Vienna, particularly in light of recent developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

### **31 Austria**

30.1.1990 | [dodis.ch/52931](https://dodis.ch/52931)

#### **Memorandum of conversation by the Austrian Foreign Ministry**

In the course of the return visit by the Prime Minister of the GDR Modrow to Austria on 26 January 1990, the Foreign Minister of the GDR Fischer met with his Austrian counterpart Mock and told him “that it would come to unification.”

### **32 Federal Republic of Germany**

31.1.1990 | [dodis.ch/52951](https://dodis.ch/52951)

#### **Memo for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher**

As Gorbachev and Shevardnadze appear to consider German unification to be inevitable, they are concentrating on steering the development through the CSCE process and on using German unification as a catalyst to influence development in Europe in their own interests.

### **33 Poland**

1.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/53172](https://dodis.ch/53172)

#### **Circular telegram by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski**

The heads of Polish diplomatic missions abroad are given the following instruction: Polish support for German reunification is made contingent upon Germany recognizing Poland’s western border along the Oder and Lusatian Neisse Rivers.

### **34 Netherlands**

8.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52960](https://dodis.ch/52960)

#### **Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek**

Report on the visit of Defence Minister Relus ter Beek to the Defence Minister of the FRG Gerhard Stoltenberg, and the possible implications of German reunification for the banking situation in Germany, NATO cooperation, and the CSCE discussions with the Soviets.

### **35 United States**

9.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52914](https://dodis.ch/52914)

#### **Draft letter from the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush, to the Chancellor of the FRG, Helmut Kohl**

President Bush wrote to express support for Chancellor Kohl’s efforts to reunify Germany while remaining in NATO amidst rapidly changing events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

29

### **36 Switzerland**

13.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52281](https://dodis.ch/52281)

#### **Political report of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl**

Analysis of the three fundamental processes of historic importance that are currently taking place in Europe: The European integration, the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and thus the elimination of bipolarity in Europe in terms of security policy and the German reunification.

### **37 Canada**

15.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52939](https://dodis.ch/52939)

#### **Telegram from the Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, de Montigny Marchand**

Observations on the corridor conversations during the Open Skies Conference in Ottawa in February 1990.

### **38 United States**

19.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52917](https://dodis.ch/52917)

#### **Memorandum for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush**

Discussion of the U.S. position in the upcoming Two-Plus-Four Talks on German reunification, particularly in light of Soviet concerns.

### **39 Israel**

20.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52945](https://dodis.ch/52945)

#### **Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry**

A report on Foreign Minister Arens' talks in Bonn with Chancellor Kohl and President von Weizsäcker. Arens told the latter that he sees the reunification of Germany as "a foregone conclusion". Kohl said that East Germany was rapidly collapsing, and assured Arens that "there is no Fourth Reich, and never will be."

### **40 Federal Republic of Germany**

20.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52952](https://dodis.ch/52952)

#### **Telegram from the Ambassador of the FRG in Tel Aviv, Wilhelm Haas, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG**

Critical reactions on behalf of the Israeli press and some cabinet members to remarks by Israel's Foreign Minister Arens on the possibility of German unification are reported.

### **41 Canada**

21.2.1990 | [dodis.ch/52940](https://dodis.ch/52940)

#### **Telegram from the Canadian Department of External Affairs to the Canadian Embassy in Washington**

Expressions of concerns that the Two Plus Four deal will squeeze Canada out of discussions about the future of Europe, notwithstanding the historic presence of Canadian forces in West Germany.

## **42 Soviet Union**

17.3.1990 | [dodis.ch/53316](https://dodis.ch/53316)

### **Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnadze**

Unequivocally accepting the right of the German people to proceed with the unification of their country, the main conditions to be observed in this process by the USSR and its Western partners are summarized and then discussed in detail.

## **43 Soviet Union**

29.3.1990 | [dodis.ch/53317](https://dodis.ch/53317)

### **Memo by the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in East Berlin, Vyacheslav Kochemasov**

The main priorities of the USSR relating to the unification of Germany are discussed in detail with particular reference to the impermissibility of its membership in the North Atlantic Alliance.

## **44 Switzerland**

10.4.1990 | [dodis.ch/52282](https://dodis.ch/52282)

### **Political report of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl**

Analysis of the remark by a secretary of the Federal Foreign Office that Bonn had been confronted with the task of reunification 20 years too early, pure and simple. He fears that the FRG is not yet integrated into Europe fully enough and that the chances of German-national upsurges remain much too real.

## **45 Israel**

16.4.1990 | [dodis.ch/52946](https://dodis.ch/52946)

### **Telegram from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry**

Review of the situation in the GDR following the elections. The new parliament has passed a resolution recognizing Germany's crimes against the Jews and instructing the government to work for establishment of relations with Israel. Open official negotiations with the GDR are proposed.

## **46 Switzerland**

18.4.1990 | [dodis.ch/49550](https://dodis.ch/49550)

### **Memo by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs**

E. Bikow, the GDR Ambassador in Bern, visits the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to present a declaration of the People's Chamber and to discuss bilateral relations, in particular visa issues.

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#### **47 Soviet Union**

26.4.1990 | [dodis.ch/53318](https://dodis.ch/53318)

**Interview by the Irish Times with the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnaze**

The USSR's approach towards the unification of Germany, considering it as a historic event meeting the aspiration of all German people, is laid out. However, it is underscored that the membership of the united Germany in NATO is unacceptable for the Soviet Union.

#### **48 United Kingdom**

23.5.1990 | [dodis.ch/52920](https://dodis.ch/52920)

**Guidance Telegram from the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd, to the British Representatives Overseas**

Information about progress towards German unification and the Two plus Four process.

#### **49 Poland**

28.5.1990 | [dodis.ch/53173](https://dodis.ch/53173)

**Memo by the Polish Military Mission in West Berlin**

Observations on the impact of German reunification on Polish-German relations. The need to develop pan-European cooperation based on the CSCE process with the participation of Canada and the United States.

#### **50 Turkey**

13.6.1990 | [dodis.ch/53322](https://dodis.ch/53322)

**Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Report regarding the joint meeting held by the Mayors of East and West Berlin.

#### **51 Turkey**

18.6.1990 | [dodis.ch/53323](https://dodis.ch/53323)

**Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Report concerning the "Draft providing the annexation of German Democratic Republic to the territory of Federal Republic of Germany", submitted by the DSU Party.

#### **52 Turkey**

21.6.1990 | [dodis.ch/53324](https://dodis.ch/53324)

**Political report of the Turkish Consul General in Berlin, Akın Emregül, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Summary of the decisions taken at the meeting between the Senate of West Berlin and the Government of East Berlin, who gathered in the City Hall of East Berlin for the first time in 42 years.

### **53 Turkey**

28.6.1990 | [dodis.ch/53325](https://dodis.ch/53325)

**Telegram from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Press statement issued by Matthias Gehler, Spokesperson of the Government of the German Democratic Republic, regarding the election dates.

### **54 Netherlands**

4.7.1990 | [dodis.ch/52961](https://dodis.ch/52961)

**Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek**

Report on the state of affairs in the GDR, where people appear pleased with the prospect of reunification and see no reason to stretch out the country's existence. These mental changes have had a profound impact on the internal political situation in the GDR.

### **55 Israel**

10.7.1990 | [dodis.ch/52947](https://dodis.ch/52947)

**Memorandum from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin, to the Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav**

A summary of the pros and cons of establishing diplomatic relations with East Germany on the eve of reunification. West Germany favours the step. It would be a diplomatic coup towards the Arabs, but would not solve the problem of Israel's material demands.

### **56 Austria**

18.7.1990 | [dodis.ch/52930](https://dodis.ch/52930)

**Memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The progress on the way to German unification after the breakthroughs of mid-July 1990 is summarised and assessed. Reflections about the repercussions for Austria's integration policy.

### **57 Austria**

19.7.1990 | [dodis.ch/52932](https://dodis.ch/52932)

**Memo by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Analysis of the Soviet position on German unification after the breakthroughs of mid-July 1990 and reflects about the reasons for Gorbachev's change of mind.

### **58 Canada**

23.7.1990 | [dodis.ch/52941](https://dodis.ch/52941)

**Telegram from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs**

Speculative reflections on the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, and what it means for Europe and the world.



## **59 Soviet Union**

6.8.1990 | [dodis.ch/53319](https://dodis.ch/53319)

**Memo for the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnaze**

The Soviet Draft of an Agreement of the final legal settlement of the German issue to be confirmed and adopted at the Meeting of Heads of States-signatories to the Final Helsinki Act.

## **60 Netherlands**

9.8.1990 | [dodis.ch/52963](https://dodis.ch/52963)

**Telegram from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek**

Report on the economic difficulties for industry in the FRG evolving from the German reunification process, while in the GDR government, industry and public services are in terminal decline.

## **61 United Kingdom**

17.9.1990 | [dodis.ch/52919](https://dodis.ch/52919)

**Letter from the Deputy Undersecretary of State (Defense) of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, John Weston, to the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby**

Impressions of the last 48 hours before the signature of the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany.

## **62 Switzerland**

2.10.1990 | [dodis.ch/49561](https://dodis.ch/49561)

**Political report of the Swiss Ambassador in East Berlin, Franz Birrer**

Assessments of the dissolution of the GDR and its accession to the FRG, with particular emphasis on the acceleration of the reunification process since the events at the Berlin Wall and its negative consequences for the GDR.

## **63 Poland**

11.11.1990 | [dodis.ch/53174](https://dodis.ch/53174)

**Memo by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski**

Summary of the talks between Prime Minister Mazowiecki and Chancellor Kohl. The current developments and arrangements for immediate measures, plans to sign a border treaty and a good neighbourly relations treaty, and the decision to abolish the visa requirement are discussed.



[dodis.ch/53168](https://dodis.ch/53168)

Poland

*Draft memo<sup>1</sup> by the Director of the 4<sup>th</sup> Department of the Polish Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs, Janusz Fekecz<sup>2</sup>*

MEMORANDUM CONCERNING THE CITIZENS OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC  
WHO REMAIN AT THE EMBASSY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY IN WARSAW

Confidential

Warsaw, 14 September 1989

I. On 13 September, Minister K. Skubiszewski<sup>3</sup> received the Director of the MFA's Political Department Kastrup<sup>4</sup>, who arrived in Poland as Minister Genscher's<sup>5</sup> special envoy to discuss the group of GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw. The talks were also attended by Ambassador Schoeller<sup>6</sup> and Deputy Director of the MFA's 4<sup>th</sup> Department Sulek<sup>7</sup>.

Director Kastrup explained that the aim of his trip to Poland was to hold talks with over 50 GDR citizens who are currently at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw and seeking to leave for the FRG for a permanent stay, and to present the official position of the West German side to the Polish authorities.

He referred to a conversation between Minister Genscher and L. Wałęsa<sup>8</sup> held in Bonn on 8 September, during which the West German foreign minister praised the Hungarian authorities for their approach to the departure of GDR citizens from the FRG Embassy in Budapest and the Hungarian territory for the FRG via Austria, and requested L. Wałęsa, as a representative of the new Poland, to apply "the Hungarian solution" to the group of GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw. At the same time, Minister Genscher emphasized the historic importance of this issue for the West-East relationship in Europe, and to human rights in general. According to Kastrup, L. Wałęsa promised Genscher that the "Hungarian model" would be followed in Poland.

<sup>1</sup> Draft memo (translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 31/92, w. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Janusz Fekecz (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P53484](https://dodis.ch/P53484), Director of the 4th Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1985–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Dieter Kastrup (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383), Political Director in the FRG Foreign Ministry, 1988–1991 and head of delegation to the 2+4 conference.

<sup>5</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>6</sup> Franz Jochen Schoeller (\*1926), [dodis.ch/P57583](https://dodis.ch/P57583), Ambassador of the FRG in Warsaw 1987–1989.

<sup>7</sup> Jerzy Sulek (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57584](https://dodis.ch/P57584), Deputy Director of the 4<sup>th</sup> Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from May 1990 Director of the Polish MFA's Europe Department.

<sup>8</sup> Lech Wałęsa (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57585](https://dodis.ch/P57585), Chairman of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" and President of Poland 22.12.1990–22.12.1995.

Director Kastrup made it clear that the FRG would not set out German legal positions in the case at hand ("it would be irrelevant which travel documents entitled the GDR citizens to leave Poland"). The FRG would prefer a pragmatic solution that took account of humanitarian considerations. To that end, they would be ready to get the Polish Red Cross, the German Red Cross and possibly also the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva on board. Both Kastrup and Ambassador Schoeller expressed their hope that the Polish authorities would show understanding and support for West German efforts to arrange the departure of GDR citizens for the FRG. They emphasized that the focus of attention of the West German public and media was on the GDR citizens at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw, just as it was for those at the FRG Embassy in Prague. In reply to Minister Skubiszewski's question, Director Kastrup described the Hungarian authorities' decision to allow GDR citizens to leave for the FRG en masse as a "humanitarian gesture in a European spirit". In this context, he recalled Genscher's words to the Hungarian authorities: "We will never forget what you did."

Minister Skubiszewski observed that the Polish side was also in favour of a pragmatic and humanitarian solution to the issue of the GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw. From our standpoint, the best option would be an amicable settlement reached by the East and West German authorities, one that would respect the interests of both governments as well as the people concerned. Poland advocated the observance of human rights, including the principle of free flow of people. In the case at hand, however, we had to bear in mind the good of Poland's relations with West and East Germany. He explained that he had not had the opportunity to familiarize himself with the content of Minister Genscher's conversation with L. Wałęsa. The stance of the Polish authorities would be determined by arrangements to be made directly by the governments of the two German states with respect to the GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw.

Director Kastrup recalled that the FRG had held talks with the GDR about the East German citizens staying at the FRG Permanent Representation in Berlin and at FRG diplomatic missions accredited in socialist countries. In contrast to the arrangements that had regulated similar cases in the past, this time the GDR authorities were reluctant to issue a "silent guarantee" allowing such people to leave for the FRG (the GDR's policy at the time had been to "consider favourably" applications for an exit permit). This time round, the GDR would only be willing to guarantee its citizens staying at the Embassies in Prague and Warsaw (until recently also Budapest) that after their return to the GDR, they would avoid punishment or consequences at their workplace, and would be granted representation by a lawyer when they appeared before East German administrative authorities. What the GDR authorities would not accept was that such citizens should be able to leave a third state directly for the FRG, as had been happening under "the Hungarian solution". Consequently, people who were staying at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw could only have "a very vague hope" of leaving for West Germany. In Kastrup's view, the GDR authorities were unlikely to change their position at that stage, which was why talks between both German states had stalled.

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Minister Skubiszewski concluded the meeting by reiterating that we appreciated the importance of the humanitarian aspect involved in the issue of GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw, and were aware of the possible ramifications for our relations with West and East Germany. He promised to look into the matter and give a concrete reply setting out the Polish position.

*II.* On 13 September, Director Kastrup and Ambassador Schoeller were also received by J. Czyrek<sup>9</sup>, the Minister of State at the President's Office. One of the topics discussed was the problem of over 50 GDR citizens staying at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw and wanting to leave for West Germany.

Director Kastrup emphasized that he was aware of the fundamental differences on legal matters between the People's Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany. Even so, the West German side sought a pragmatic solution with humanitarian dimensions. Minister Czyrek asked for an explanation of the political context of the problem, given recent declarations by the Federal Republic of Germany that it was not interested in destabilizing the GDR, and was keen to ensure the appropriate standards in that country in order to stem emigration. Did the current situation point to a shift in West German policy? (The FRG was creating many incentives to encourage immigration). *K[astrup]* emphasized that "human matters" could not be separated from politics. Young East Germans saw no opportunities for themselves (this went beyond mere economic motivation); they had been following news about the progress of reforms in the USSR, Poland and Hungary. Meanwhile, the current East German leadership was unable to solve these problems. "Mass fleeing" had its roots solely in the GDR, so a policy change in the FRG was not a factor here. *K[astrup]* underscored that he was requesting "humanitarian assistance in solving this problem, while taking account of human rights". Minister Czyrek replied that he appreciated the humanitarian dimension of the issue. We would not try to "turn it into a problem". From the logical and substantive points of view, this was primarily a matter to be settled between East and West Germany, however, and as such should be resolved by way of an understanding between the two countries. Such an understanding would be decisive for Poland, as we could be loyal both to the FRG and GDR. Minister Czyrek referred to Minister Skubiszewski's decision as presented during the talks with *K[astrup]*, whereby a working group would be set up as a matter of urgency to draft proposals for a Polish position.

Minister Czyrek went on to underline that the matter was very difficult for Poland, as we viewed our friendly relations with the GDR as a serious issue and, unlike Hungary, we have no direct border with any Western states.

<sup>9</sup> Józef Czyrek (1928–2013), [dodis.ch/P44031](http://dodis.ch/P44031), member of the Political Bureau and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and Minister of State in the Office of the Polish President 1989–1991.

### *III. Conclusions*

a) The issue of GDR citizens remaining at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw could have negative repercussions for either of the two German states, depending on which solution we support. If we side with the GDR, we risk negative effects in the context of Kohl's<sup>10</sup> visit to Poland<sup>11</sup>; if we go along with West German proposals, the political fallout could affect our relationship with the GDR.

b) From our point of view, the best way out would be if the two German states achieved an amicable settlement between themselves. At this stage, however, such a solution is unlikely and we are under permanent pressure from representatives of both countries (see J. Mąkosa's<sup>12</sup> memo of 12 September on the conversation with GDR Ambassador J. van Zwoll<sup>13</sup>).

c) In these circumstances, the MFA has set up a working group headed by B. Kulski<sup>14</sup> to come up with possible solutions. What could prove helpful for us would be a solution to be adopted in the next few days in the similar case in Prague.

d) One should bear in mind that the problem will continue to grow (the number of GDR citizens at the FRG Embassy in Warsaw increased to 50 in the course of two weeks).

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<sup>10</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>11</sup> Helmut Kohl visited Poland on 9–10 and 12–14 November 1989 (following the fall of the Berlin Wall, Chancellor Kohl interrupted his visit to go back to the FRG).

<sup>12</sup> Jerzy Mąkosa, [dodis.ch/P50485](https://dodis.ch/P50485), Director of the 1<sup>st</sup> Department at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989–1990.

<sup>13</sup> Jürgen van Zwoll (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57587](https://dodis.ch/P57587), Ambassador of the GDR in Warsaw 1988–1990.

<sup>14</sup> Bolesław Kulski, [dodis.ch/P50550](https://dodis.ch/P50550), Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 1988–1990.

[dodis.ch/52927](https://dodis.ch/52927)

Austria

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

THE SPECTER OF GERMAN REUNIFICATION

Vienna, 19 September 1989

A specter is haunting Europe. The specter of German reunification, and it scares the Western Europeans. This fear – rarely acknowledged – is behind many discussions about the future of European security.

The two superpowers are apparently less bound by fear. One sometimes hears from both the US and the USSR that German “reunification” is not only possible, but perhaps even desirable. The expectations of the US and the USSR are, however, contradictory: The United States expects that a reunified Germany would push against the East, and weaken the USSR. The Soviet Union expects that a reunified Germany would step out of NATO, and thus fatally weaken NATO.

This discussion of German reunification is surprising in some respects. After all, because of its treaties with the East, through its recognition of the GDR, and through its involvement in the CSCE process, the FRG seemed to have finally and irrevocably accepted the status quo in Europe and thus the existence of two

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (translated from German): Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1989, GZ. 22.17.01/4-II.6/89. Written and signed by Thomas Nowotny, [dodis.ch/P57516](https://dodis.ch/P57516); also published in Wilson Center, doc. [165711](https://dodis.ch/P57511). This memo was sent to all section leaders, the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister, all departments of the Political Section as well as to all Austrian diplomatic missions in states participating in the CSCE. On 20 September 1989, Ernst Sucharipa attached a note to this file entitled German reunification? On the ghost train ride of Department II.6. The statement should have been forwarded to the Section Heads, the Cabinet of the Federal Minister, all departments of the Political Section, the General Secretary, the Austrian Embassies in Bonn, Berlin (East) and Moscow, the Austrian delegation in Berlin as well as to all Austrian diplomatic representations in states participating in the CSCE. However, for unknown reasons, it was not forwarded. The note read: 1) It is correct that there is again increasing talk everywhere about the question of German reunification (or “new unification”, according to IISS Director Heisbourg). Basic consideration of the issues raised in the essay of department II.6 therefore seem inevitable in Austria. Here are the first brief remarks from the perspective of the Eastern Europe Department; 2) In foreign policy, perception is often more important than reality: Despite the circumstances mentioned by Department II.6., which “trivialize” the dimension of a Germany consisting of the FRG and GDR, the impression (the fear) will persist in Eastern (and also Western) Europe that such a structure cannot be integrated into the European Peace Order. 3) Despite the publicity-effective emigration movements from the GDR (Scale in 1989: approx. 100,000 citizens, of which approx. 5/6 “legally”, 1/6 “illegally”) there is a “GDR national consciousness” and pride in the benefits of its “own”, “other” German state, which is not to be underestimated. The silent majority is still a majority even in the GDR. The slowly forming opposition groups want to keep their GDR (reformed and completely overhauled, but distinct from the FRG). 4) In spite of Perestroika and Glasnost, the Soviet Union looks everywhere to strictly maintain the territorial status quo. German-political changes that go beyond, ‘change through rapprochement’ are therefore not to be achieved without argument with Moscow.*

German states, and without ulterior motives. Against the backdrop of these hard facts, the question begs to be asked: How serious is this new flare-up talk of reunification? Is there really nothing more to it than a mere superficial and purely verbal response to the advance of the right-wing nationalist “Republicans” in the FRG? Or is it to be taken more seriously?

The question was broached at the Ambassadors’ Conference in early September. The ambassadors in both Berlin<sup>2</sup> and Bonn<sup>3</sup> were unanimously convinced that this talk is not to be taken seriously. Nobody in a position of political responsibility, according to the Austrian ambassador in Bonn, would really aim for a “reunification” with the GDR.<sup>4</sup> The coexistence of the two states would be accepted by virtually all. The maximum goal supported by almost all political parties would merely be a “Germany policy” that intensifies existing contacts between both States at all levels.

The Austrian Ambassador in Berlin claimed there was no great pressure for radical changes in the GDR. Sudden outbursts and changes of course are not to be expected. Because it works on the whole, the state would also be accepted by the population.

The opinions expressed by the two ambassadors describe – probably accurately – the current state, which is not a given. They assume that this state will essentially remain unchanged. This may be correct, but need not be so. There is some evidence that attitudes toward “reunification” are changing in the two German states. In the two German states, there are signs of a fundamental change in the political climate. In the FRG, for example, the Historians’ Dispute (in which German war-guilt was relativized) changed the emotional-political framework in which postwar international relations were anchored. Three to four years ago it would have been unthinkable that the Polish-German border would be called into question again by a high-ranking politician and many years after its recognition by the Warsaw Treaty.

Three or four years ago this would have signified the end of every political career. Not so today. A whole new attitude towards the European East has estab-

2 Franz Wunderbaldinger (\*1927), [dodis.ch/P52001](http://dodis.ch/P52001), Austrian Ambassador in West Berlin 1985–1990.

3 Friedrich Bauer (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P51060](http://dodis.ch/P51060), Austrian Ambassador in Bonn 1986–1990.

4 During the ambassadors’ conference at the Austrian Foreign Ministry on 8 September 1989 Wunderbaldinger noted: German-German relationship: contractual regulations in many areas, strong contacts at various low levels. Large flow of visitors in both directions. Bauer later added: The West was not prepared for the so strongly desired reform process in the East, and has no concept. The FRG sees the EC as a place to embed itself in Western Europe (leading it out of the status of a defeated country). Bonn wants to include the EC in its own policy on Germany. Relationship FRG-GDR: little information about intra-German trade. Meeting of Bonn-Berlin representatives about adapting intra-German to internal market rules. FRG seeks osmotic relationship with GDR. Reunification in the Bismarkian sense is not sought. The head of the political section of the Austrian foreign ministry ambassador Erich Maximilian Schmid summarized: The transformation process in the East was desired by the West, yet it was completely unprepared for this. The reduction of tensions resulted from the economic impossibility of a permanent arms race. This should have been predictable. Processes in the East are to be assessed positively, but there is a danger of it spiraling out of control and resulting in destabilization. Austria welcomes upheavals in the East, but these pose a danger that Austria could be associated with a kind of gray zone in Central Europe. German reunification: a theoretical discussion topic indeed, but not currently a reality. Cf. the minutes of the Ambassadors’ Conference, 1989; Working group East-West, Envoy Johann Plattner, Vienna, 8 September 1989, ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1989, GZ. 502.00.00/13-II.1/89.



41 lished itself— obviously and gradually there is a renewed belief in a special “German mission in the East.” This mission goes far beyond the “Ostpolitik” of Willy Brandt<sup>5</sup>. Its essential goal had only been the acceptance of the status quo. But the objectives of today’s German Ostpolitik are more ambitious. In their new nationalism, the aggressive advocacy of unification, and their skepticism towards the west and European integration the right-wing “Republicans” are thus a symptom of a political change in mood that encompasses more than just their voters.

The GDR appears to be the most solid of the communist states – especially in economic terms. Nevertheless, this country has political feet of clay. The binding power of communist ideology has – if it ever was great – anyhow disappeared. This also happened in other communist countries. These other states, however, base their social cohesion and identity on something other than communist ideology – on religion or – mostly – on nationalism. There is probably no such thing as GDR nationalism. At best, there is a certain feeling of connection with their homeland. One probably got used to some convenient facilities of “real existing socialism” in the GDR – such as secure jobs, cheap food staples and apartments, etc. But that alone does not secure identity, and this comfort will gradually wane in the course of necessary economic reforms, which will come sooner or later, even in the GDR. Likewise, it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold the state together with dictatorial measures. Where, if not mainly to the FRG, would the GDR turn if its economic and political opening can no longer be delayed?

Reunification may, therefore, very well be on the future political agenda of the two German states. Formally, the other – and especially Western European – states cannot object. The principle of self-determination is recognized internationally. This principle will not be questioned openly by any Western European country and not when applied to the two German states. Actually, no one wants a real application of this principle by a “reunification.” This fear, however, is not articulated openly. One is only too aware of the fact that taking an open stand against reunification would only strengthen the extreme and nationalist forces in the Federal Republic. Hence, there is no open political dialogue with the FRG on this issue – only unadmitted silent fear.

If, in what form, and when there is a merger of the German states, is certainly uncertain. In any case, the desire for “reunification” in both German states cannot be ruled out, especially in the FRG, once it ceases to be a merely abstract and distant goal and becomes a specific concern. One should thus take the possibility of a reunification seriously and really examine what the consequences would be. Would such a reunification actually blow up the entire postwar order?

Reunification would certainly be a huge shock for this order. It is argued below that the European postwar order would not have to fall apart because of this. Even a reunified Germany would not be so strong that it would dominate the European continent economically and militarily. It would just be a very big country among the other major European states.

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<sup>5</sup> Willy Brandt (1913–1992), [dodis.ch/P15409](https://dodis.ch/P15409), Foreign Minister of the FRG 1966–1969 and Chancellor of the FRG 1969–1974.

	Inhabitants 1985	Inhabitants 2025	Surface in km <sup>2</sup>
FRG	61.0	57.2	249,000
GDR	16.6	17.3	108,000
Together	77.6	74.5	357,00
France	55.2	63.7	547,000
Italy	57.1	58.5	301,000
Czechoslovakia	17.5	18.5	127,000
Poland	37.2	48.0	312,000
Together	54.7	66.5	439,000

The surface of a reunified Germany would be 357,000 km<sup>2</sup>, far less than the combined area of Poland and Czechoslovakia (439,000 km<sup>2</sup>).

In the GDR, the population is growing slowly, in West Germany it is dropping sharply. In 2025, a "unified Germany" would have a population of 74.5 million. France would, in contrast, have a population of 63.7 million, and Czechoslovakia and Poland together would have a combined population of 66.5 million.

Not only is the FRG's population growth low (or even negative), the FRG's economy is also far less dynamic than itself and other European countries assume. The most reliable measure of the development of economic power is the development of productivity. The development of productivity in the Federal Republic of Germany has been slow since 1960 and risen far less than in either France or Italy.

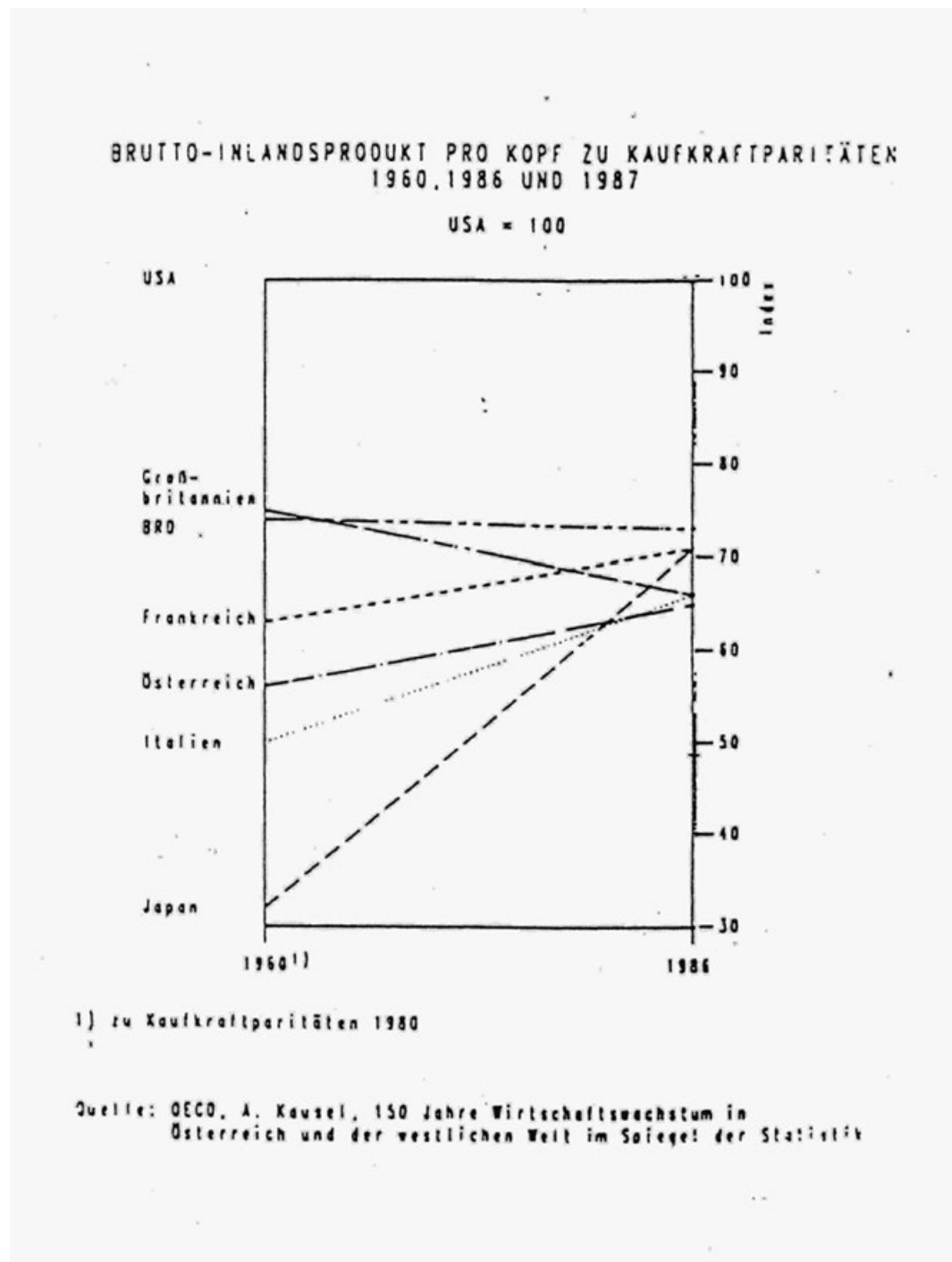
These trends are likely to continue, and in 10 years at the latest France will have caught up in absolute economic power with the FRG.

One must assume that even with reunification the current GDR could not immediately be brought up to the economic level of the FRG. One could therefore assume that the productivity of the area that is the GDR today, even in 2025, would be somewhere – perhaps around 15% – below the productivity of the current FRG. The entire economic potential of the two unified areas would therefore in 2025 approximately match the economic power that France will then have.

The economic power of a "unified Germany" must not just be compared with France, but also with the rest of the Western European states. Above all, the southern EC countries (such as Italy and Spain) will – as in the past, but also in the future – develop more rapidly economically, so the economic and political weight of these EC countries will increase when compared to the FRG or a "reunified Germany".

A reunified Germany would not be significantly greater in population and economic strength than the FRG is today: namely, one among the most powerful nations of Europe.

The consequences of a "reunification" cannot, however, only be looked at from a purely economic standpoint: they also need to be viewed from a military security perspective. What would be the consequences of "reunification" in this area?



Gross domestic product per capita at purchasing power parities 1960, 1986 and 1987

### *Military and Security Policy Aspects of a "Reunification"*

"Reunification" is sometimes associated with a "neutralization" of the then united Germany. Neutralization would thus be condition or result of an association of the two German states.

*First*, as Khrushchev<sup>6</sup> said during his tenure to the then Foreign Minister Kreisky:<sup>7</sup> “Neutrality is a status which is appropriate for a small country located geographically and security-politics-wise between two powers.” Neutrality does not apply to a state that, because of its own great influence, whether it wants that or not, becomes a significant factor in international relations. The Ostpolitik of a reunified Germany, even if that state is formally “neutral”, in practice would not be neutral. Whatever a large state undertakes has far-reaching consequences, both in the West and in the East of the continent. For example, whether a small neutral country participates in sanctions does not significantly increase or reduce the effectiveness of such sanctions, but whether a country with more than 70 million inhabitants participates, this determines very well whether such sanctions are effective or not.

*Second*, a “neutralization” of the current FRG (as proposed by the neoconservative American intellectual Irving Kristol<sup>8</sup> in the enclosed article) would weaken the Western defense alliance so much as to make it insubstantial. “Geopolitically”, geography simply privileges a large landmass to the east of the continent. In contrast, NATO-allied Western Europe has less strategic depth. If this depth were further reduced by the “neutralization” of the FRG, a military counterweight to the Soviet Union could in no way be maintained on such shrunken territory. A “balance” (or better: a conflict-hindering balance of power) would no longer exist.

*Third*, the neutralization of West Germany would naturally bring about the withdrawal of US troops from Europe (which are stationed for the most part in the FRG). Europeans doubt – probably rightly – the ultimate effectiveness of the “nuclear guarantee” granted to them by the US. More important is the guarantee – or “hostage” function of American troops. These troops enable – more effectively than nuclear missiles – the “coupling” of the European theater of war to the United States. This coupling would be lost with the withdrawal of US troops.

*Fourth*, there is perhaps a problem with a reunited Germany arming itself with nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are today quite “cheap” to produce. The technical know-how is certainly available in the FRG. The incentive to guarantee one’s security in such a “cheap” way through nuclear deterrence is therefore considerable. Speaking against the purchase of national nuclear weapons is certainly the uncertainty that the possession of such weapons would trigger in European countries in East and West. Speaking for the possession of nuclear weapons is the fact that a reunified and neutral Germany would be surrounded by potential enemies, who could be held at bay best and most “cheaply” with the aid of nuclear deterrence.

*Fifth*, one must question if the FRG stepping out of the western defense alliance would even be physically possible as things stand. The FRG is nowadays very tightly integrated economically and socially with the rest of Western Europe.

6 Nikita Khrushchev (1894–1971), [dodis.ch/P14485](https://dodis.ch/P14485), First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 1953–1964 and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union 1958–1964.

7 Bruno Kreisky (1911–1990), [dodis.ch/P2507](https://dodis.ch/P2507), Austrian Foreign Minister 1959–1966 and Federal Chancellor 1970–1983.

8 Irving Kristol (1920–2009), [dodis.ch/P57517](https://dodis.ch/P57517), American author and social scientist, protagonist of the neoconservative movement.

45 This Western European integration and cooperation will increasingly extend to security matters. The situation where European security is provided largely by the United States can historically not be maintained indefinitely. Western Europe will increasingly have to provide for its own security – sooner rather than later.

Security policy is all-embracing. It also has a specifically economic aspect and an economic basis. If a “neutralized” reunified Germany were to pursue an independent security policy, then the FRG would have to, at least in some important areas (such as in technology), free itself from already existing dependencies and connections with Western European countries. But the integration of Western Europe has already progressed too far. This option of stepping out of Western European cooperation is no longer open to the FRG. For example, the FRG no longer has the option to develop its own aviation and aerospace industry separately from the rest of Western Europe.

It is of course the – acknowledged or unacknowledged – objective of the remaining Western European countries to strengthen the integration of the FRG into Western Europe and make it irreversible. Behind the integration-friendly policy of France is not just France’s desire to secure its influence through a united Western Europe, which it could not exercise acting alone in today’s world. With this policy, France is also pursuing its objective of strengthening the “Western tying” of the FRG to an extent that makes it inextricable.

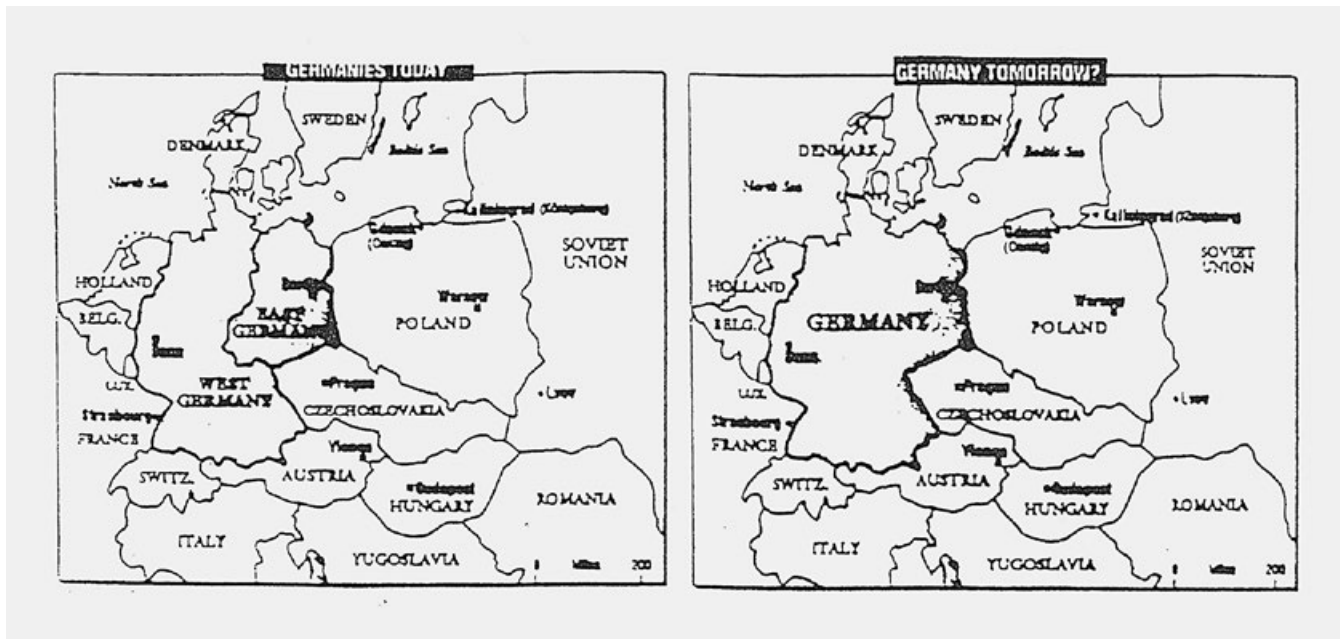
Hence, it is both unlikely and undesirable that the FRG should withdraw from NATO to become neutral simply in order to “unite” with the GDR. This would also not be in the long-term interests of the Warsaw Pact and the USSR. A united Western Europe (also including the FRG) would certainly have a far less ambitious “Ostpolitik” than a reunified, neutral Germany.

What would be the consequences of the more likely solution in which the reunified Germany does not become “neutral” and the FRG remains in the Western defense alliance? This would certainly result in a military shift at the expense of the East. But this shift is less far-reaching than one would at first assume.

The advantage that the Warsaw Pact currently draws from the fact that the GDR is a member shows itself in the light of the present – still – ruling Soviet military doctrine. This demands that in the event of an East-West war, Warsaw Pact troops will advance to the Atlantic Ocean as quickly as possible in order to prevent the arrival of reinforcements from the US. The “Spur” in the south of the GDR that protrudes into West Germany (“Fulda Gap”) would serve as a springboard for such an offensive.

However, it is intended and also probable that the military doctrines will be changed. The predominant doctrines in both the West (“deep strike,” FOFA) and the East (“forward defense”) assume “attack is the best defense”. These offensive military tactics are contrary to the principally defensive strategic objectives of the two alliances, who just want to maintain the status quo and seek no territorial gains.

If the military alliances and, especially, the Warsaw Pact convert their “defense” to a purely defensive one, with no element of attack against Western Europe, this removes the goal of reaching the Atlantic coast as quickly as possible, thus lowering the military value of the East German spur protruding into the



FRG. This reduces the military disadvantage of withdrawing the GDR from the Warsaw Pact. The loss of militarily useable terrain is hardly decisive strategically. The GDR is, in its east-west dimensions of 200–300 km, a relatively narrow state. In contrast, the new East-West border, also being the eastern border of a reunified Germany, would have the advantage of being straighter than the previous military East-West border and therefore easier to defend.

Indeed, Czechoslovakia would be more negatively affected by such a shift in the military dividing line to the east. Its north-west border is currently covered against NATO by the GDR. If the GDR withdraws from the Warsaw Pact, this border would be directly exposed to NATO. A solution to this problem could be to “demilitarize” the territory of the present GDR even after reunification with the FRG, although the reunified Germany would belong to NATO, and this demilitarization could be secured through international guarantees.

#### *Summary:*

Despite lip service supporting the right of “self-determination”, at present no European country desires German “reunification”. The fear of such a reunification can, however, become a highly destabilizing element for European policy, even without being able to prevent reunification. Whether reunification actually happens is, of course, uncertain, but it cannot be excluded. In both German states there are developments that make such a reunification more probable today than it was just two to three years ago. A reunified Germany could and should not be neutral or neutralized. If at least the western part of the reunified Germany remains integrated in NATO, and the entire Germany is a member of the EC, then no threat would arise through a newly formed military and economically dominant superstate, which is the general fear.

[dodis.ch/52942](https://dodis.ch/52942)

Israel

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Israeli Foreign Ministry*

Secret/Usual [priority]

Bonn, 27 October 1989

Today I had a long talk with Wolfgang Mischnick<sup>3</sup>, the chairman of the FDP faction. Mischnick returned 48 hours ago from a visit to East Berlin and was in fact the first Western politician to meet with Egon Krenz<sup>4</sup> and the East German leadership.

In interviews with the media he spoke of his optimistic impressions with regard to expected developments in East Germany.

When talking to me, he admitted that he had taken this line not so much because he believes it is actually correct, but because he tends to believe that in this case impressions and public reports about them can influence the process. His impression is that there is indeed an atmosphere of change and a strong expectation [of it] among the public, but in private he would not dare to predict that this atmosphere of change will become reality.

He mentioned that Krenz and Gorbachev<sup>5</sup> had studied at around the same time at the senior Party college in Moscow, and it is not impossible that this will influence Krenz. He emphasized repeatedly that in the USSR change is coming from the top down, whereas in East Germany it is coming from below. It is being adopted – even if only partially – by the local functionaries who are trying to pass it up the line, but it is not certain to what extent this will go through. In his opinion a process like that taking place in Hungary or Poland is not to be expected, due to the significant difference caused by the German aspect.

First, [concerning] the justification for the existence of a second German state if it is not socialist and second – the question of a possible reunification.

I told him about the Israeli-Jewish dilemma with regard to East Germany, especially that country's unwillingness to relate to its past. I also described the traditional hostility of East Germany towards Israel and its unsuccessful efforts to

<sup>1</sup> Coded telegram (incoming, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives MFA9537/11. Delivered by: 28 October 1989. Addressed to Europe divisions 1 and 3.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Navon (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57507](https://dodis.ch/P57507), Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, 1989–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Wolfgang Mischnick (1921–2002), [dodis.ch/P57508](https://dodis.ch/P57508), Chairman of the FDP faction in the Bundestag of the FRG 1968–1991.

<sup>4</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

<sup>5</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

- 48** gain support in the U.S. by displaying a seemingly positive attitude to the restoration of a cemetery and a synagogue and the employment of a rabbi for the tiny Jewish community in East Berlin. He told me that at the end of January 1990 he would visit East Germany at the head of an FDP party delegation and we agreed that we would discuss the latter subject before he leaves.



[dodis.ch/52957](https://dodis.ch/52957)

Netherlands

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs<sup>2</sup>, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek<sup>3</sup>*

GDR INTERNALLY

Confidential

East Berlin, 8 November 1989

Is there a more significant symbol imaginable for the “revaluation of all values”<sup>4</sup> in this country than a high official from the Ministry of the Interior who in a forum discussion on GDR-TV calls upon his fellow countrymen on their way to the Federal Republic to be sure to travel via border post a and not border post b, because at border post a there is less traffic and things can therefore be arranged much faster?

For all observers here reporting on the state of affairs in the GDR is now at least as difficult as jumping on a speeding TGV as it passes. Now the Politburo has resigned as well! The international media provide a good overall picture of the situation, and in particular the West German media also offer enough grounds for analysis and reflection. Nonetheless, I will not exclude you from some personal notes regarding the past week.

1.

The big demonstration of last Saturday in Berlin has – apart from the exemplary peaceful and at times even somewhat playful sequence of events – brought to light a few interesting things. First, the credibility problem still hangs like a millstone around Krenz<sup>5</sup> neck. The rapid succession of concessional gestures, steps and decisions in the first weeks after his leadership acceptance has not provided a “benefit of the doubt” position for him. During the rally the functionary whom we would call the Dean of the Order of Attorneys in the Netherlands gave a speech. Among other things, he openly praised Krenz for his de-escalating intervention shortly after the heavy-handed police action on 6 and 7 October, when the tension in the country was high. A deafening protest was the speaker’s reward. The same thing happened when the speaker suggested that Krenz should be judged in the GDR on his actions and not for his words on the events in Beijing in June. A lot

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 177 (incoming, translated from Dutch): Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs BZ, 5e Blok [NA 2.05.392], inv.nr. 2128. Delivered by: 8 November 1989, 8.17 p.m.

<sup>2</sup> Egbert Jacobs (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57545](https://dodis.ch/P57545), Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin 1989–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in German: Umwertung aller Werte.

<sup>5</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

of water – and mercury – will need to flow under the bridge over the Elbe before Krenz will manage to get into a position where the man in the street *will* give him the benefit of the doubt. This is especially true because *the* skeleton in his closet for him is not so much his statement about Beijing, as his presidency of the “Election Committee” of 7 May last. Now that the pressure to introduce a radically new electoral law is becoming irresistible, it is inevitable that and in the margin of this – also fundamental – discussion, the electoral fraud of May will be brought to the fore, which is still fresh in the memory. Krenz will not be able to separate himself from this.

A second noteworthy aspect to last Saturday’s big rally (which, as far as I know, has not been reported internationally) was the total – repeat total – absence of references to re-unification. Most of the banners that were carried had slogans with a fierce political content in relation to this country – not a subject remains undiscussed in the streets, in public and “teach-in”-like meetings, and also on the nowadays in any case worthwhile GDR-television – but about re-unification there was not a word, not a slogan, not a chorus and not a banner. The preoccupation of both the leaders of the block parties that were awakened from their hibernation and the leaders of the “Initiative”, and of the demonstrators in the street is still the reformation of the GDR. In Dutch newspapers I also read reflections of more or less authoritative opinion makers who all assume axiomatically that the end of the present turbulent developments can only be re-unification. “The more freedom, the less GDR”, as it is crisply put. Be this as it may, the now unleashed public discussion in the GDR, which has no taboos, gives *no* evidence of this axiom. But maybe that does not apply to axioms.

## 2.

The Volkskammer also awakes. The concept of the “Travel Law” had hardly been published before the standing committee on justice completely rejected the draft. Personally, and admittedly based on conspiracy theories, I had assumed that the design would have some room “built in” for amendments by the Volkskammer, after which a draft as amended by the Volkskammer would receive force of law. Although I do not know the composition of this permanent committee it may be assumed that it will have a majority of SED members. On this politically white hot GDR issue with which *all* representatives would like to show themselves aligned, the budding profiling drive (*also* of the SED-representatives) has apparently overcome the usual party discipline.

Meanwhile the permanent committee for “Constitution and Law” of the Volkskammer has charged the Presidium in unambiguous terms with laxity and has demanded an emergency session with plenary debate.

## 3.

In close interaction with the awakening of the Volkskammer the awakening of the block parties is taking place. I have reported before on the pioneering role of the liberal LDPD and its chairman Gerlach<sup>6</sup>. He continues to fulfill this role. As the first person belonging to the political establishment he recently questioned the

<sup>6</sup> Manfred Gerlach (1928–2011), [dodis.ch/P54812](https://dodis.ch/P54812), Chairman of the Council of State of the GDR 6.12.1989–5.4.1990.

51 “claim to power and truth”<sup>7</sup> of the SED. In the past 2 months Gerlach has shown himself to be a good director of the interaction between his own statements and the street protests, and there need be no doubt in my opinion that the promised new electoral law will in fact defray with the “leading role”<sup>8</sup> of the SED. The question remains how the lawyers will shape things, taking into account that the Minister of Justice<sup>9</sup> – now obviously outgoing – is the only LDPD member in the government.

Gerlach has already been nominated for the presidency of the Volkskammer by his party and he appears to me a good contender, also given the fact that Krenz clearly wants him to (co-)play a prominent role. This would boost the activation process of the Volkskammer and would enable the LDPD, with a new chairman, to distance itself from the past, and therefore from the SED.

Meanwhile the NDPD has chosen a new chairman, the CDU is still working on this. The potential importance of a credible CDU-chairman is of course fundamental for the recovery of good relations with the churches, because these were in fact non-existent. And should it come to that, then it needs no argument that a strong, potential oppositional block could arise. The general break-up has now taken its first victim in the Evangelische Kirche: the legion of “public officials who have resigned”<sup>10</sup> has been reinforced with the Bishop of Greifswald<sup>11</sup> a few days ago, the most state-loyal Landesbischof in the Evangelische Kirche, the man who in July received Honecker<sup>12</sup> at the consecration of the restored basilica in Greifswald, to the apprehension of his colleagues.

#### 4.

Amidst all the powder vapor it remains significant that still no personality with even a glimmer of charisma has risen to report “to speak”.<sup>13</sup> The line-up of speakers at the large Berlin rally included a number of well-known artists, Prof. Reich of the Neue Forum, and also the former HVA-chief Markus Wolf<sup>14</sup>, all of whom are speakers of an almost sleep-inducing dullness. The SED secretary in Dresden, Modrow<sup>15</sup>, now internationally typified as a “reformer”, is in the lead in a demonstration that specifically demands the “renunciation of the monopoly on power and truth”<sup>16</sup> of his own SED, but in his public appearance he has the characteristics of an alderman from Ootmarsum<sup>17</sup>. The same applies in my opinion

7 Quoted in German: Machts- und Wahrheitsanspruch.

8 Quoted in German: führende Rolle.

9 Hans-Joachim Heusinger (\*1925): [dodis.ch/P57546](https://dodis.ch/P57546), Deputy Chairman Council of Ministers of the GDR 1972–1989.

10 Quoted in German: zurückgetretene öffentliche Persönlichkeiten.

11 Horst Gienke (\*1930): [dodis.ch/P57547](https://dodis.ch/P57547), Bishop of Greifswald 1972–1989.

12 Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

13 Quoted in German: zu Wort.

14 Markus Wolf (1924–2006), [dodis.ch/P57548](https://dodis.ch/P57548), GDR spymaster and head of the STASI (Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung) 1952–1989.

15 Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

16 Quoted in German: Verzicht auf Machts- und Wahrheitsmonopol.

17 Village on the eastern border of the Netherlands, [dodis.ch/G15397](https://dodis.ch/G15397).

to Günther Schabowski<sup>18</sup>, who incidentally was the only major SED-functionary (Politburo) to speak at the big Berlin rally and hardly got a word in, because he was constantly being shrieked down. A bad omen for this “reformer” who will presumably receive a heavier portfolio within the Politburo (economy?, media?).

Also noticeably absent from the stage are actors with a conservative background. If there is a GDR-Ligachev<sup>19</sup> he dares not manifest himself as such. I find this deceitful, because it is difficult to conceive that there is no conservative wing within the SED. In the euphoria of the moment it is too easily assumed that there are really no communists left in the GDR.

5.

Today the Central Committee of the SED has gathered for its 3-day meeting. It is expected that this assembly will also demand an emergency session of the Volksskammer, with plenary debate, bringing forward the date of the elections for the Volksskammer (which Krenz mentioned were tentatively planned for mid- '91 just two weeks ago), a special SED Party Congress to be held this year – the regular Congress is scheduled in May '90 – a directive statement on emigration (which will take into account the rejection of the draft submitted by the government), on a new electoral law, on the economy, and a new Politburo. At the very least.

6.

And finally: there are still no strikes. Instead people are working extra time, more and more. How is it possible.

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<sup>18</sup> Günther Schabowski (1929–2015), [dodis.ch/P56902](https://dodis.ch/P56902), member of the SED Politburo and spokesman of the GDR government 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Yegor Ligachev (\*1920), [dodis.ch/P57414](https://dodis.ch/P57414), Second Secretary of Communist Party of the Soviet Union 10.3.1985–14.7.1990.

[dodis.ch/52948](https://dodis.ch/52948)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Extract from the Diary<sup>1</sup> of the Protocol Officer at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw,  
Rüdiger Freiherr von Fritsch<sup>2</sup>*

# KOHL'S VISIT AND THE FALL OF THE WALL

Warsaw, 9 and 10 November 1989

*Thursday, 9 November 1989:* Early in the morning, Deutsche Welle says: "Everything is finally ready. The route has been planned, the communiqués written and the Chancellor<sup>3</sup> can now travel to Poland ..." If they only knew! The Ambassador<sup>4</sup> is trying desperately to contact the Foreign Minister<sup>5</sup>, but is not getting anywhere. Not only is the visit programme still up in the air, but the planned joint declaration by Kohl and Mazowiecki<sup>6</sup>, which has been discussed for months, isn't finished either. The Chancellor has let it be known that he will not leave Bonn until it is ready. Yesterday, the discussion focused on whether we should say "of German ethnic origin" or "of German descent". Today, the talk concerns an "and" or "or" in some part of the text I'm not familiar with. At some point, that too is resolved. Can the Chancellor and his entourage really set off? Warsaw is shrouded in fog! At around 12.30 p.m., we got the go-ahead from Polish security. The flight was scheduled to leave Bonn at 1.00 p.m. ... We set off for the airport just after two, the delegation arrived and we drove back to the city. Chancellor Kohl has rejected the suggested programme for the weekend once again and wants to discuss it with Mazowiecki himself.

<sup>1</sup> *Diary (translated from German). The diary is privately owned. These extracts were published in German in the Federal Foreign Office staff magazine "InternAA", 2012, No. 12, p. 8. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 19.*

<sup>2</sup> *Rüdiger Freiherr von Fritsch (\*1953), [dodis.ch/P57375](https://dodis.ch/P57375), Protocol officer at the Embassy of the FRG in Warsaw 23.10.1989–15.11.1989. He had served as a Protocol Officer at the Embassy in Warsaw from 1986 to the autumn of 1989 and had already been posted to Nairobi when he was summoned back to Warsaw at short notice in late October 1989 to work on Chancellor Kohl's long-planned visit to Poland from 9 to 14 November 1989.*

<sup>3</sup> *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

<sup>4</sup> *Günther Knackstedt (1929–2012), [dodis.ch/P57376](https://dodis.ch/P57376), Ambassador of the FRG in Warsaw 3.11.1989–1.6.1992.*

<sup>5</sup> *Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.*

<sup>6</sup> *Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927–2013), [dodis.ch/P57378](https://dodis.ch/P57378), Prime Minister of Poland 24.8.1989–12.1.1991.*

At around 6.30 p.m., Genscher<sup>7</sup> met Adam Michnik<sup>8</sup>, one of the leading figures in the democratic (hitherto) opposition and now editor-in-chief of “Gazeta Wyborcza”, Solidarity’s new daily. It was an interesting meeting. Michnik is preoccupied with the German Question. For the first time, he said, it feels as if the GDR actually exists as a state. Formerly, it was not merely a state with a Soviet basis, but rather a Soviet basis with a state. In his opinion, that gives rise to entirely new opportunities, also as regards the question of reunification. He said people only want to reform the GDR, not renounce it. He’s worried about growing nationalism in Europe, particularly in hitherto socialist countries, and sees this as a result of radical anti-communism, with the pendulum now swinging the other way. This is tangible in Poland, he said, but also in Hungary and the Soviet Union. – Earlier on, I heard the news that put everything else in the shade – the GDR has opened its borders. Incredible! How will Europe live with that? National reunification or European integration, as planned from 1992? Germany must become the main topic (of conflict) in Europe in the near future.

*Friday, 10 November 1989:* The events in Germany are all anyone is talking about in the government guest house. The Chancellor’s office is talking about him flying back at around 5.00 or 5.30 p.m. today. He would then return to Poland, maybe tomorrow. It’s all go in the delegation office. Special guests on the delegation want to know what’s going on and the journalists are already packing. Shortly afterwards, we hear that the Chancellor has decided to fly as early as 2.30 p.m. Hectic attempts are made to inform the flight crew. Shortly after that, I meet a colleague outside the Council of Ministers building who tells me the Chancellor wants to fly at 1.30 p.m.! We speed out to the airport, where I speak to the airport management by phone. They immediately dispatch security staff and the necessary technicians who see what can be done. The plane hasn’t even been refuelled yet. They allow our car onto the airfield – the military section!

12.45 p.m. The captain doesn’t know yet that the departure has been brought forward. “2.00 p.m. at the earliest if it all goes well.” But that means there won’t be any food on board. No worries, the main thing is to get away. After some discussion, the Polish side is prepared to let the plane take off from its parking position, thus saving 20 minutes.

1.45 p.m. The plane is ready for take-off. The Polish security people are very cooperative and obliging. They don’t bother inspecting passports or anything.

Kohl and Genscher arrive five minutes later. They give a short statement to the press and the plane leaves. We draw up a tourism programme from scratch for the special delegation members who have been left behind.

A colleague and I meet Adam Michnik at “Gazeta Wyborcza” at 10.00 p.m. He signs a copy of today’s paper for us. The front page has a picture of Kohl and Mazowiecki and the headline “Europe without Walls”. At the dinner afterwards, there is a very lively discussion, as always. We talk about Germany, Poland, Russia and Europe. We discuss the church, nationalism, republicans and socialism.

<sup>7</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>8</sup> Adam Michnik (\*1946), [dodis.ch/P57379](https://dodis.ch/P57379), Member of the Sejm for Solidarnosz and editor-in-chief of the *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

**55** We cover Solidarity and the future, as well as European integration and the German Question.

Michnik is surprised and fascinated by the events in the GDR, which have not changed his positive attitude towards German unification in the slightest. In fact, he feels the events back up his analysis. He wants to know what we think will happen. What would be possible in a situation like this? It's hard to say what will happen tomorrow.



[dodis.ch/52915](https://dodis.ch/52915)

United States

*Information Memorandum<sup>1</sup> for the United States Secretary of State, James A. Baker<sup>2</sup>*

THE WALL BREACHED: IMPLICATIONS FOR MALTA, YOUR TRIP TO EUROPE, RELATIONS  
WITH THE GDR, AND THE REUNIFICATION DEBATE

Confidential

Washington, D.C., 10 November 1989

The East German decision to lift travel restrictions has created a new situation in Europe. This memo is a first attempt to address the implications for the Malta meeting and your December trip, for relations with the GDR, and for our handling of the debate on reunification.

*The Malta Meeting*

Events in Germany further demonstrate the wisdom of the President's<sup>3</sup> decision to hold an early, informal exchange with Gorbachev<sup>4</sup>. Attention will very much be on Europe and German events. At the same time, it is all the more important to avoid creating the impression that these issues will dominate the Malta discussion. We need to avoid both any suggestion of superpower condominium (the "Malta rhymes with Yalta" concern) and also recognize that the results of a Bush-Gorbachev discussion on Germany and Eastern Europe are liable to be meager and thus for the public disappointing. Consequently, we should begin to emphasize that the Malta discussions are designed to move the US-Soviet dialogue forward across the board, and that we are looking for substantial exchanges on arms control, regional and transnational issues as well as on the situation in Europe. We should also consider how events in the GDR might affect our approach to the economic issues. Gorbachev's support for open borders in Germany, combined with Soviet passage of their own immigration legislation, could provide a basis for early forward movement on Jackson-Vanik, MFN and perhaps even Ex-Im Bank lending restrictions.

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum (copy)*: Bush Presidential Library CF01414-008. Written by James F. Dobbins, [dodis.ch/P57393](https://dodis.ch/P57393), and transmitted through Robert M. Kimmitt, [dodis.ch/P57396](https://dodis.ch/P57396).

<sup>2</sup> James A. Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

<sup>3</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.



57 *Pre- and Post-Malta Consultations and Your Trip to Europe*

The NSC<sup>5</sup> has said the President wants to enhance pre-Malta consultations, and asked our advice. We recommend an early Presidential message to the NATO colleagues, followed by a pre-Malta briefing here of Allied Ambassadors. We anticipate high interest among your Foreign Minister colleagues in an early post-Malta readout. If you agree, we should contact Genscher<sup>6</sup>, Dumas<sup>7</sup>, and Hurd<sup>8</sup> to see whether they would be ready to travel to Brussels for an immediate post-Malta debrief. If at least two out of these three are prepared to participate, we recommend you schedule such a session. The quickened pace of events in Europe also makes the full range of consultations under consideration for the following week (the EC, a G-24, and NATO Ministerials) all the more important. Finally, we continue to recommend a visit to Bonn and West Berlin to accentuate our solidarity with the FRG and the central role of the United States in promoting a peaceful change in Europe. If you concur, we could begin arranging for such visits, but hold up on announcement till somewhat closer to the event.

*Relations with the GDR*

Assuming they do not back-pedal from the steps already announced, we should move to expand our relations with the GDR. An early Presidential message to Krenz<sup>9</sup> expressing approval for the travel liberalization and support for further reforms should be considered. If the new permanent GDR travel regime, reportedly to be promulgated in a few weeks leaves the borders open, we should consider a Jackson-Vanik waiver for the GDR.

An early senior level visit to East Berlin (e.g., by Eagleburger<sup>10</sup>, Kimmitt<sup>11</sup> or Seitz<sup>12</sup>) would demonstrate our interest in an improved relationship, launch serious talks to remove some old bilateral obstacles (i.e., unresolved claims issues), and open the way for yet higher level contacts next year (e.g., a visit by yourself). Any actual U.S. economic assistance to the GDR, of the sort we are providing Hungary and Poland, should be tied to the holding of genuinely free elections, as Kohl has recently done. Given the FRG stake, the amount of US assistance would in any case be minimal, but even a symbolic US participation might be useful in the context of a truly reformed GDR.

5 National Security Council.

6 Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

7 Roland Dumas (\*1922), [dodis.ch/P15651](https://dodis.ch/P15651), Foreign Minister of France 10.5.1988–28.3.1993.

8 Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

9 Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

10 Lawrence S. Eagleburger (1930–2011), [dodis.ch/P57397](https://dodis.ch/P57397), United States Deputy Secretary of State 20.3.1989–8.12.1992.

11 Robert M. Kimmitt (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57396](https://dodis.ch/P57396), United States Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs 2.3.1989–23.8.1991.

12 Raymond G. H. Seitz (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57399](https://dodis.ch/P57399), United States Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs 8.8.1989–30.4.1991.

*Discussing German Reunification*

The reunification debate will become all the more immediate, concrete, and delicate. There will be pressures both domestic and from Allies for the United States to take the lead in sketching out a blueprint and timetable for the new European order. With the Germans increasingly seizing control of their own destiny, there will be those who will urge us to reassert more forcefully our own rights and responsibilities for Germany, growing out of the war and the four power Yalta and Potsdam agreements. The problems with such an approach are that it puts the onus on us to come forward with plans for a new European architecture, that it legitimizes the Soviet veto, and that it makes us appear a possible obstacle to German aspirations. We should, therefore, keep the emphasis where we have put it, upon the principle of self-determination.

The time has come, however, to begin to address more concretely with the FRG, the British and the French the issues which the prospect of reunification in some form pose. We should seek agreement among these Allies, and then among NATO more generally, not on a blueprint, let alone a timetable for reunification, but on a set of guidelines for channeling any developments in this direction. The key guideline is that the process of West European integration, and of transatlantic cooperation should continue to be intensified, and that any new relationship between the two German states must not weaken Germany's Western ties. Kohl<sup>13</sup>, of course, has stressed this very theme repeatedly. We now need to begin considering how Germany's Western ties can in practice be assured in a transformed European context. The British and French will welcome such a discussion, while the Germans will hold back. But we need to make an effort. The next Quad meeting, which Dumas, Genscher and Hurd are proposing be held over dinner December 13, provides an occasion to launch this exchange.

I have reviewed these recommendations with Ray Seitz, who concurs.

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<sup>13</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

[dodis.ch/52922](https://dodis.ch/52922)

United Kingdom

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the British Commandant in Berlin, Robert Corbett<sup>2</sup>, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd<sup>3</sup>*

GDR: TRAVEL TO FRG AND WEST BERLIN

Unclassified, Flash

West Berlin, 10 November 1989, 9.15 a.m.

#### *Summary*

1. West Berliners initially incredulous. Emotional scenes at the Wall. Constant flow of East Berliners through the night. Most were testing the system and have returned home. Next four days could be testing.

#### *Detail*

2. At a reception at the Aspen Institute at 5.30 p.m. local yesterday, a young colleague of the governing mayor confided in Head of Chancery<sup>4</sup> that a year ago, he took the view that the Wall would remain beyond the year 2000. Now it could be down in as little as five years, he thought. A few minutes later, the former Governing Mayor, Diepgen<sup>5</sup>, commented in a speech that what had been inconceivable a few weeks ago, might well be conceivable tomorrow.

3. Neither had any inkling that as little as two hours later, the city would begin to buzz with rumours that travel from East to West was now unrestricted.

4. Within hours of Schabowski's<sup>6</sup> comments, broadcast on television, hundreds of East Berliners were queuing at the sector crossing points. After some initial uncertainty, the GDR border guards began to let them through. No special documentation was being required. The guards seemed content to put a stamp in an ordinary identity card.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 77 (incoming): UK National Archives FCO 33/10154. Repeated Flash to the British Embassy in Bonn; Information Immediate to the British Embassies in East Berlin, Washington and Paris, Commanders-in-Chief Committee (Germany); Information Priority to the UK Representation in NATO, the British Embassies in Warsaw and Prague and UK Representation in Brussels. Ref. East Berlin Telegram No. 369.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Corbett (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57445](https://dodis.ch/P57445), General Officer Commanding, Berlin (British sector) and British Commandant, Berlin 1989–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Lamont (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57479](https://dodis.ch/P57479), Head of Chancery, British Military Government, Berlin 1988–1990.

<sup>5</sup> Eberhard Diepgen (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57478](https://dodis.ch/P57478), Mayor of West Berlin, 1984–16.3.1989.

<sup>6</sup> Günter Schabowski (1929–2015), [dodis.ch/P56902](https://dodis.ch/P56902), member of the SED Politburo and spokesman of the GDR government 1989.

5. Later, crowds began to gather on the Western side. There seemed a possibility of trouble breaking out. And the Governing Mayor<sup>7</sup> who was at a crossing point in the British sector telephoned the minister in some concern. Head of Chancery, with my chief of staff<sup>8</sup> and two members of BMG<sup>9</sup> public safety branch therefore made a tour of some of the key points in the early morning.

6. At 2 a.m. they found the Governing Mayor mingling with the crowds at the Invalidenstrasse crossing point. The Head of the Senat Chancellery<sup>10</sup> was euphoric and incredulous. "A wonderful morning" he proclaimed. And he spoke emotionally of seeing two GDR guards, two West Berlin police and two members of the Royal Military Police talking together and cooperating in controlling the large crowds. A constant flow of East German Trabant cars was passing into the west of the city. They were warmly greeted by West Berlin spectators, many of whom spilled eastwards across the sector boundary without any reaction from the GDR borders guards. Indeed the guards here were beaming, visibly enjoying their new role of shepherding happy East Berliners in both directions across the crossing point. Several of the East Berliners waved palm leaves from the windows of the cars.

7. A little distance away, groups of two or three GDR soldiers could be seen by the wire. They were no doubt wondering what function they were now expected to perform.

8. I spoke to the Governing Mayor at this point and found him much more relaxed and confident that matters were under control. He was in jubilant mood.

9. The Brandenburg Gate at 3 a.m. presented an amazing scene. Some hours before, some young West Berliners had climbed on to the Wall, which is broad and flat-topped at this point. The GDR guards had turned a water jet on them. But the intervention of some people in civilian dress on the Eastern side put a stop to this. And eventually as many as 600 young people were on top of the Wall, bathed in television lights, mostly quietly enjoying the unique occasion, and occasionally shouting "the Wall must go". Some were chipping at the Wall with hammer and chisel and distributing pieces to the crowd.

10. At Checkpoint Charlie at 4 a.m., several bare-headed GDR guards faced a friendly, jostling crowd. The ground was littered with the glass from broken bottles, and the guards sensibly closed the gates until the area could be cleared. They moved the crowd of West Berliners back to the sector boundary in a calm, gentle and skilful way.

11. Television interviews with East Berliners testified to the fact that most were spontaneously testing whether the restrictions had indeed been lifted. A common goal was the "Ku'damm", West Berlin's main shopping avenue. At 4.30 a.m., it was lined with East German registered Trabants. And on the pavements, throngs of East and West Berliners mixed and greeted each other with obvious emotion.

<sup>7</sup> Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), *Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991*.

<sup>8</sup> Geoffrey van Orden (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57481](https://dodis.ch/P57481), *Chief of Staff of the British Sector in Berlin 1988–1990*.

<sup>9</sup> *British Military Government*.

<sup>10</sup> Dieter Schröder (\*1935), [dodis.ch/P57480](https://dodis.ch/P57480), *Head of Chancellery of the Senate of Berlin 1989–1991*.

61        12. Though some of last night's visitors had proceeded to Marienfelde refugee camp, most seem to have gone back. The Senat met in an emergency session last night and the Governing Mayor appeared on television to urge East Berliners not (not) to visit West Berlin immediately, but to spread their visits over the next few days. Allied ministers will meet with the head of the Senat Chancellery at 11.30 a.m. (local) and will have to consider requests for help. The Allied *kommandatura*<sup>11</sup> will convene this afternoon.

13. We stimulated the Americans (who are in the chair) into producing an Allied statement welcoming this historical step. Text will follow.

14. This morning at 8.30 local an estimated 3000 East Berliners were waiting at the Invalidenstrasse crossing point. The GDR authorities have made clear that proper documentation will be required. We have seen no sign of any difficulties at the crossing points so far. The atmosphere on both sides remains friendly and cooperative.

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<sup>11</sup> The governing body for the city of Berlin following Germany's defeat in the Second World War, comprising representatives of the USA, USSR, UK and France.

[dodis.ch/52911](https://dodis.ch/52911)

United States

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> by the United States' Deputy National Security Advisor,  
Robert M. Gates<sup>2</sup>*

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH HELMUT KOHL<sup>3</sup>, CHANCELLOR – FEDERAL REPUBLIC  
OF GERMANY

Confidential

Washington, D.C., 10 November 1989

*Chancellor Kohl*: The reforms in Poland are moving ahead. They have a new government with fine people. They are too idealistic with too little professionalism. Many of their professionals have spent the last couple of years in prison, not a place where one can learn how to govern. They are committed to democracy and market economics; we must help them. My request is as follows.

I just told Margaret Thatcher<sup>4</sup> and will tell Mitterrand<sup>5</sup> tomorrow that we should give instructions to our representatives at the IMF that the negotiations with Poland should be completed speedily. These negotiations are not nice for the Poles but they are aware of the need and they seek clarity and clear cut conditions. We should help to get an agreement completed by the end of November. So I ask you, help us. Go and do this in the interest of the people. With respect to the rest of my trip to Poland, I will tell you next week after I return. Do you have any questions on Poland.

*The President<sup>6</sup>*: I have no questions; I'll be interested to hear from you next week. I'm very interested in the GDR.

*Kohl*: I've just arrived from Berlin. It is like witnessing an enormous fair. It has the atmosphere of a festival. The frontiers are absolutely open. At certain points they are literally taking down the Wall and building new checkpoints. At Checkpoint Charlie, thousands of people are crossing both ways. There are many young people who are coming over for a visit and enjoying our open way of life. I expect they will go home tonight. I would cautiously tell you that it appears that the

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum (copy)*: Bush Presidential Library 91111-004. Participants: George H. W. Bush, Helmut Kohl and Robert M. Gates. The conversation took place in the Oval Office on 10 November, 1989, 3.29–3.47PM.

<sup>2</sup> Robert M. Gates (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57404](https://dodis.ch/P57404), United States Deputy National Security Advisor 20.3.1989–6.11.1991.

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.

<sup>5</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

<sup>6</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

63 opening has not led to a dramatic increase in the movement of refugees. It may be with the frontier open, people will simply go back and forth, looking, visiting and going home. This will work only if the GDR really reforms and I have my doubts. Krenz<sup>7</sup> will carry out reforms but I think there are limits. One of those limits seems to be one party rule, and this simply will not work. Certainly, in particular, it will not work without pluralism, free trade unions and so forth. I could imagine that this will continue for a few weeks – that for a few weeks people will wait to see if the reforms come and if there is no light at the end of the tunnel they will run away from the GDR in great numbers. This would be a catastrophe for economic development; good people are leaving. The figures this year – 230,000 have come. Their average age has been between 25 and 30. This is a catastrophe for the GDR. They are doctors, lawyers, specialists who cannot be replaced. They can earn more here. This is a dramatic thing; an historic hour. Let me repeat. There were two major manifestations (political gatherings) in Berlin. One was in front of the Berlin Town Hall where there were a lot of left wing rowdies, these are the pictures that will be shown on TV around the world. The second was at the Kurfurstendamm organized by our political friends. It was at about 6:30PM and the estimates are that there were 120,000–200,000 people. The overall spirit was optimistic and friendly. When I thanked the Americans for their role in all of this, there was much applause. Without the US this day would not have been possible. Tell your people that. The GDR people in the protests and demonstrations have been sincere, not aggressive. This makes it very impressive. There have been no conflicts, even though in East Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden hundreds of thousands have been in the streets. I hope they will continue to be calm and peaceful. This is my short report.

*The President:* First, let me say how great is our respect for the way the FRG has handled all of this. Second, my meeting with Gorbachev<sup>8</sup> in early December has become even more important. I want to be sure you and I spend enough time on the telephone so I have the full benefit of your thinking before I meet with him.

*Kohl:* We should do that. It's important.

*The President:* I will call Brady<sup>9</sup> today or tomorrow to tell him of your suggestion for a rapid completion of the IMF agreement on Poland. Fourth, I want to see our people continue to avoid especially hot rhetoric that might by mistake cause a problem.

*Kohl:* That's very good of you.

7 Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

8 Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

9 Nicholas F. Brady (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57405](https://dodis.ch/P57405), United States Secretary of the Treasury 15.9.1988–17.1.1993.

**64**      *The President:* Fifth, I want to tell the US press of our talk, that you gave me a thorough briefing, that you did publicly acknowledge the role of the US, and that you and I agreed to talk later next week.

*Kohl:* Excellent.

*The President:* Take care, good luck. I'm proud of the way you're handling an extraordinarily difficult problem.

*Kohl:* Thank you. Give my best to Barbara<sup>10</sup>.

*The President:* I'm in Dallas. Same to Hannelore<sup>11</sup>.

*Kohl:* Thank you and kind regards. Tell her to save her money that I intend to send sausages for Christmas.

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**10**    Barbara Bush (1925–2018), [dodis.ch/P57406](https://dodis.ch/P57406), United States First Lady 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

**11**    Hannelore Kohl (1933–2001), [dodis.ch/P57407](https://dodis.ch/P57407), Wife of Helmut Kohl.



[dodis.ch/53169](https://dodis.ch/53169)

Poland

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Polish Ambassador in East Berlin, Janusz Obodowski<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski<sup>3</sup>*

For immediate action

East Berlin, 10 November 1989, 1.00 a.m.

Following Schabowski's<sup>4</sup> statement about the opening of borders with the West, the border with the FRG has burst. Masses of people are crossing into West Berlin. Some are moving back and forth. Rallies at the W[est] B[erlin] border.

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<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 0-1789/IV (incoming, translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, ZD 24/91, w. 3, t. 9. Delivered by: 10 November 1989, 4.00 a.m.

<sup>2</sup> Janusz Obodowski (1930–2011), [dodis.ch/P57588](https://dodis.ch/P57588), Polish Ambassador in East Berlin 1986–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Günter Schabowski (1929–2015), [dodis.ch/P56902](https://dodis.ch/P56902), member of the SED Politburo and spokesman of the GDR government 1989.

[dodis.ch/52928](https://dodis.ch/52928)

Austria

*Circular<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

DEBATE ON GERMAN REUNIFICATION; INFORMATION AND LANGUAGE REGIME

Vienna, 10 November 1989

Concerning a possible redesigning of the German-German relationship in connection with the current debate on East-West development, the following information and language regime in agreement with Dep. II.3<sup>2</sup> are being disclosed:

*1) Basic documents*

The victorious powers had already agreed at the *Yalta Conference* (in early 1945) about the division of Germany ("westward shift" of Poland; breaking up of Germany: "In the exercise of this power, they (the victorious powers) will take such measures ... including the complete disarmament ... and dismemberment of Germany ... as they see necessary ... for keeping the future peace").

With the resolutions of the *Potsdam Conference* (summer 1945) the victors took over authority in Germany and divided the country into occupation zones. Until further notice, no central German Government was to be installed. The final territorial settlement should be reserved for a peace conference. A formulation from the Yalta conference report was included again ("... take measures which are necessary to assure that Germany can never again ... threaten world peace").

In the preamble of the Basic Law, the entire German people are called upon to "in free self-determination, bring about the unity and freedom of Germany in a united Europe".

The "Convention on relations between the Three Powers and the FRG" (1952), by which the occupation regime was ended and the FRG gained full sovereignty, states: "In view of the international situation, which until now has prevented the reunification of Germany and the conclusion of a peace treaty, the Three Powers retain their heretofore exercised or held rights and responsibilities with respect to Berlin and Germany as a whole, including the reunification of Germany and a peace settlement."

<sup>1</sup> *Circular (translated from German):* Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1989, GZ. 22.17.01/8-II.1/89. Written and signed by Johann Plattner, [dodis.ch/P57520](https://dodis.ch/P57520); also published in Wilson Center, doc. [165713](https://dodis.ch/P57513). Sent to the Foreign Minister, the General Secretary, the section heads, the Departments II.3 and II.6 as well as the Austrian diplomatic representations according to the distribution list "East + West." The head of the department for Eastern and Southeastern Europe in the Political Section of the Austrian Foreign Ministry, Ernst Sucharipa, had demanded major changes in the wording.

<sup>2</sup> Ernst Sucharipa (1947–2005), [dodis.ch/P57511](https://dodis.ch/P57511), Head of the Department for Eastern and Southeastern Europe in the Political Section of the Austrian Foreign Ministry 1987–1990.

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In the “*Treaty on the basis of relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic*” (1972) both countries argue for the development of normal good-neighborly relations on the basis of equality and reaffirm the inviolability of the existing borders. In the preamble, however, the differing views of the FRG and the GDR on fundamental questions, including the national question, are determined.

In “*Letter on German Unity*” (1970<sup>3</sup>), the FRG affirmed its claim to reunification (“... to work for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation will regain its unity through free self-determination”).

Retention of the reunification claim is also provided in *Additional Clarifications of the FRG on the Treaty of Rome* (non-recognition of East German citizenship; protocol on intra-German trade; reservation concerning a possible future EC membership of the GDR).

The *Federal Constitutional Court* asserted in its judgments on the Eastern Treaties (1973 and 1975) that the German Reich continues to exist under international law, and the restoration of national unity may not be given up by any constitutional body as a political goal.

The *Constitution of the GDR* (1974) does not contain any intention to reunify.

## 2) *The Policy of the Bonn Government*

Despite their retention of the claim to reunification, the government in Bonn operates under the current reality of the existence of two German States, respects the inviolability of existing borders and maintains a “Permanent Representation” in (East)-Berlin. This representation is, however, not under the control of the Foreign Office, but by the Federal Chancellery and is headed by a Secretary of State. A GDR citizenship has, however, never been recognized.

The government in Bonn has tried in recent years to work through a policy of small steps to improve the status quo in relations with the GDR (improving the human rights situation, more freedom and democracy in the GDR, more freedom to travel through a “permeable” border).

In his previous statements on German-German relations, Foreign Minister Genscher<sup>4</sup> has pointed out in light of recent developments that the FRG also sees the framework for the goal formulated in the Letter on German Unity in the European Peace Order. This goal can only be achieved in full with respect to the concluded treaties and only with the consent of all countries in Europe, not against them. In accordance with the thought expressed in the Basic Law (“... in a united Europe ...”), Genscher wants changes in the German-German relationship to be embedded in a pan-European development. With regard to statements made by West German politicians, in which the existing borders of Poland are questioned, Chancellor Kohl<sup>5</sup> and Foreign Minister Genscher have since clarified that the FRG makes no territorial claims toward Poland.

<sup>3</sup> In the original falsely indicated as 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>5</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

### 3) *The Attitude of the GDR*

The government of the GDR without change emphasizes – not least in the context of citizenship – the existence and international recognition of two German states.

It appears worth noting that the reform groups have not in any way called the independent existence of the GDR into question so far; the right to reunification is not raised in opposition circles.

### 4) *The Attitude of the European States*

From Gorbachev's<sup>6</sup> statements (the current European order is not being idealized, but recognition of the post-war reality has so far secured peace on the continent) and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's<sup>7</sup> statements (rejection of revanchist forces that tried to revise postwar realities in Europe) it is clear that the Moscow leadership still holds on to the "status quo ante" and will not allow any change of this order.

In the relevant parts of the joint statement signed by Gorbachev and Kohl on 13 June 1989, formulations are used which are compatible with the position of the Soviet Union (namely the right to freely choose one's system, but respect for the integrity of each State; and the participation of Berlin (West) in the developing cooperation under the strict observation of the Four Power Agreement of 1971). A rethinking in Moscow of the Berlin question, or even the Germany question, has not yet come about.

Of the Western European countries, only statements by France and Belgium on the German-German question have become known. President Mitterrand<sup>8</sup> noted that the reunification of the two German states is a legitimate concern of the German people, but that this issue also concerns the four victorious powers and that European stability must be given priority. Foreign Minister Eyskens<sup>9</sup> declared in the Belgian senate that there is sympathy for the German people's desire for reunification, but that a solution to this problem must be integrated into the pan-European development context.

The overall conclusion is that the Western European countries are reserving judgement on the opportunities apparently presented by German reunification.

The United States is much more positive towards a reunification of the two German states.

What solutions are to be found for the German-German question (the continuation of a second German state but with democratic structures, a federal solution, reunification) are not foreseeable. It is highly probable that the topic of reunification will occupy and influence European policy in the coming years.

Only if the embassy is addressed in this regard, should it state that the right to self-determination, which Austria supports without restriction, must of course

6 Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

7 Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

8 François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

9 Mark Eyskens (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57464](https://dodis.ch/P57464), Belgian Foreign Minister 19.6.1989–7.3.1992.

- 69** also apply to the population of the GDR. Any change in the German-German relationship, however, should be such that the détente and peace process in Europe is not endangered.

[dodis.ch/53320](https://dodis.ch/53320)

Turkey

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Extremely urgent

East Berlin, 11 November 1989, 1.00 p.m.

1) Following the opening of the Berlin Wall, the important information and observation gathered by our embassy from the western and local media concerning the recent developments which occurred in Berlin during the night of 10 November and this morning (11 November) are summarized as submitted below:

On 10 November, more than 40 thousand citizens of the German Democratic Republic crossed to West Berlin. The crossing process continues at a rate of 100 vehicles and 3,000 people per hour. It is estimated that approximately one million East Berlin citizens will cross to West Berlin for touristic purposes during the weekend. The police of the German Democratic Republic are providing the necessary convenience on the border and around the Wall, and their demeanor is moderate and pleasant. The Berlin subway has been opened.

Over the last 24 hours, a mere 2,500 people crossing to the west indented for permanent migration.

The citizens of East Germany are being welcomed in a festive atmosphere by their cognates in West Berlin. The traffic police are not fining them for parking illegally (negative), city-dwellers are distributing gifts, and the banks in the Federal German Republic are distributing an allowance of 100 DM to each arriving guest. In the bars of West Berlin, the East German Mark was also accepted last night.

At the border gates along the Berlin Wall, there is a stampede. All the families seeking to cross over together with the intention to "visit" formed queues of tens of thousands of people at the train and subway stations by the border gates.

The west and east side of the Berlin Wall, built 28 years ago over one night and responsible for the deaths of 71,000 innocents trying to escape from the east over the course of its existence, was demolished during the night of 10 November 1989 under the supervision of engineers from the German Democratic Republic, opening the way for easy transits.

In addition to these gates, four additional gates will be opened on Tuesday, 14 November. It was indicated that the number of gates for crossing to West Berlin would be increased from 13 to 31. It has been suggested that the historic Branden-

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 105/2 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archives 3211439. Delivered to the duty officer at the communications centre: 11 November 1989 2.10 p.m. Copy to the Turkish Embassy in Bonn. Ref: a) non-confidential telegram No. 905 b) non-confidential telegram No. 941.

<sup>2</sup> Metin Mekik (1932–2013), [dodis.ch/P57531](https://dodis.ch/P57531), Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin.

71 burg Gate will also be opened; thousands of Berlin's youths are sitting on the Wall at this point and protesting.

During the night of 10 November, Helmut Kohl<sup>3</sup>, the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany and Willy Brandt<sup>4</sup>, who was the mayor of West Berlin when the Berlin Wall was built in the summer of 1961, arrived in Berlin and made speeches in front of the Wall.

In his speech, the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany said "we are one nation, let's struggle together."

2) During the meeting of the Central Committee of the said party, decisions concerning the realisation of free democratic elections, ensuring a secret ballot, providing for the freedom of press and submitting the secret police for trial were taken.

Thanks to the maturity of the people of the German Democratic Republic, who are aware of having suffered hard times and the moderate and rationalist attitudes of their leaders, the incidents that are occurring are adding momentum to the shift towards democracy.

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<sup>3</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>4</sup> Willy Brandt (1913–1992), [dodis.ch/P15409](https://dodis.ch/P15409), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 3.10.1957–1.12.1966 and Chancellor of the FRG 22.10.1969–7.5.1974.

[dodis.ch/53321](https://dodis.ch/53321)

Turkey

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Turkish Ambassador in Bonn, Reşat Arim<sup>2</sup>, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Urgent

Bonn, 11 November 1989, 10.00 a.m.

Having returned from Berlin, Chancellor Kohl<sup>3</sup> made a statement about the developments in the German Democratic Republic in the press conference organized following the cabinet meeting.

Having stated that the Federal Government had summoned the State and Party Administration of the German Democratic Republic to open their gates for a radical change in the fields of state, economy and society, Kohl reiterated that they are ready for assistance. He also declared that he had had a detailed phone conversation with Krenz<sup>4</sup>, the leader of the German Democratic Republic and that he had informed Krenz about his appreciation of their decision concerning the opening of the borders, that they agreed upon a visit by Federal Minister Seiters<sup>5</sup> to Berlin on 20 November to conduct preparatory meetings with the Administration of the German Democratic Republic and that Seiters would meet with Krenz and the Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic<sup>6</sup>, who will have been elected by then. He noted that they would want to know in these meetings the concrete steps which the Administration of the German Democratic Republic intend to take, especially how and when they will organize the free elections which have been announced. He also stated that Krenz and he decided to meet somewhere outside East Berlin in the German Democratic Republic.

Having indicated that he had also had telephone conversations with President Bush<sup>7</sup>, President Mitterrand<sup>8</sup> and Prime Minister Thatcher<sup>9</sup>, Kohl also declared

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 386 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archive 3211299. Reference: our non-confidential telegram numbered 1481.

<sup>2</sup> Reşat Arim (1931–2017), [dodis.ch/P53697](https://dodis.ch/P53697), Turkish Ambassador in Bonn 31.8.1988–26.11.1990.

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>4</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

<sup>5</sup> Rudolf Seiters (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57431](https://dodis.ch/P57431), Chief of Staff of the Chancellery and Minister of Special Affairs of the FRG 21.4.1989–26.11.1991.

<sup>6</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>7</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>8</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.



73 that he informed his colleagues about his visit to Poland and he mentioned his first impressions of the opening of the Berlin Wall, that he was in constant contact with Gorbachev<sup>10</sup> and that he had notified Gorbachev by telephone an hour earlier about his assessment of the situation.

Having reported that Germans from the German Democratic Republic were still coming to stay in the Federal Republic of Germany despite the first indications of change in the German Democratic Republic, Kohl said, “I absolutely object to the fact that the notable social democrats now try to provoke embarrassingly the excitement and feelings against these citizens”, and called on the public for help. He also declared that there was still a long way to go to reach the target and that all the Germans had not yet gained the right to self-determination and he recommended being moderate.

At the end of the press conference, Kohl reported that he would resume his visit by returning to Warsaw that afternoon.

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<sup>10</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

[dodis.ch/52923](https://dodis.ch/52923)

United Kingdom

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the British Ambassador in East Berlin, Nigel Broomfield<sup>2</sup>, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd<sup>3</sup>*

#### FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GDR

Confidential, Immediate

East Berlin, 13 November 1989, 9.10 a.m.

#### *Summary*

1. A new chapter in Germany's post war history.

#### *Detail*

2. It is not for me to comment on the effect on West Berlin and the FRG of the influx of some three million East Germans over the past four days. But viewed from East Berlin the last four days mark a decisive change in the political life of the GDR.

3. Even though 4.2 million visas were issued since 9 November, only 10,144 were for emigration according to GDR figures. This is an encouraging ratio for the leadership, and indeed there are reports of people returning. But the situation remains fluid, the exodus could begin again at any time if the leadership started to resile on the numerous promises they have given in the last few days about new policies. The Politburo will have to learn to live under this sword of Damocles.

4. The breaching of the Berlin Wall, the opening of a new crossing at Potsdamer Platz, the scene of the 1953 uprising and the heart of old Berlin, by the mayors of East and West Berlin<sup>4</sup>, are deeply symbolic acts. The millions who crossed into West Berlin and the FRG since 9 November are fundamental political facts for the future of this country.

5. The tears and euphoria will die down and no doubt aggravations and resentments will surface in some areas but first-hand knowledge of the other German state and of their friendly reception there over this weekend has spread very widely among the population here and not just as before, among the privileged

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 381 (incoming): UK National Archives FCO 33/10154. Ref. My Telegram No. 377. Repeated for Information Immediate to the British Embassies in Bonn, Washington, Moscow and Paris, the British Military Government in Berlin, the UK Delegation to NATO; Information Routine to Eastern European posts; Information Saving to EC posts, the UK Representation in Brussels and the British Embassy in Beijing.

<sup>2</sup> Nigel Broomfield (1937–2018), [dodis.ch/P57477](https://dodis.ch/P57477), British Ambassador in East Berlin, 1988–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991 and Erhard Krack (1931–2000), [dodis.ch/P55386](https://dodis.ch/P55386), Mayor of East Berlin 11.2.1974–15.2.1990.

75 few with relatives in the West. This cannot be taken away again without risking an overwhelming political reaction.

6. Krenz<sup>5</sup> may claim as he did on GDR television on 11 November after talking to Kohl<sup>6</sup> and agreeing to meet “soon”, that what had happened were sovereign decisions by the GDR and that for him reunification was not on the agenda. But power has passed in substantial measure to the people and it is they who from now on will increasingly decide the future of this country. How they will decide is not yet clear.

7. Unless a cataclysm occurs in the Soviet Union and sets back with it the reforms in Poland and Hungary I cannot see how a rapid process of growing together of the two German states can be avoided. Krenz may be replaced by Modrow<sup>7</sup>, who may succeed for a time in making the party popular again. There is wide support among the bloc parties as well as the protest groups for the principles of socialism variously defined. But the present system of planning the economy based on widespread public ownership cannot satisfy the peoples, demands sharpened as they will be by increasing familiarity with West Berlin and the FRG.

8. Whether in a dramatic move to stave off economic collapse in the next few months or in a more gradual process, the strength of the FRG economy acting on the structural and systemic weaknesses of the GDR is bound to have a profound effect. (I think it impossible that the structural alterations to the GDR's economy can take place by the time Kohl and Krenz have their first meeting in November/December. And without these alterations Kohl has said, quite sensibly in my view, investment from the FRG will not be attracted to the GDR. The threat of imminent economic collapse looks to be a more likely trigger for West German assistance than slow structural change.)

9. I do not think it fanciful to see something of the same process happening on the political front with existing links between parties in East and West Germany. The CDU (West) has just begun to have contact with the CDU (East). The same is true for the SPD (West) and the SPD (East, still unofficial) whose membership of the socialist international the former will support. The FDP (West) has long had links with the LDPD (East, “liberal”). The SED will derive little benefit from its close contacts with DKP (West) and the SEW (West Berlin).

10. There will no doubt be many twists and surprises in the way events actually work out between the two German states. But from the point of view of our policy towards the GDR we should take note of underlying realities which the events of the last few days and weeks have exposed so clearly.

<sup>5</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

<sup>6</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>7</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

[dodis.ch/49548](https://dodis.ch/49548)

Switzerland

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs*

GDR: IT'S NOT JUST THE WALL THAT'S SHAKING

Bern, 13 November 1989

On Friday, 10.11.1989, the signatory meets GDR embassy counsellor Tschirlich<sup>2</sup>, following the latter's urgent request and, in T[schirlich]'s words, by way of the GDR officially approaching the Swiss authorities with regard to today's historic event.

T[schirlich] appears distinctly "dépassé par les événements". He begins by delivering the attached memo<sup>3</sup>. At the time of his intervention (late Friday afternoon), both the regulations set down there and T[schirlich]'s remark that the Wall invariably persists, and continues to function as a border, are in part already obsolete. Two aspects of T[schirlich]'s in part somewhat confused deliberations, however, deserve attention:

– Today, a great number of Swiss citizens inquired at his embassy about options for informal departure from the GDR to Switzerland (for relatives etc.) and similar options for travelling into the GDR, respectively. GDR authorities assumed that the existing visa regulations between the GDR and Switzerland continue to apply.

– T[schirlich] appears to be inquiring, although in a very hedged manner, whether Switzerland would lend support to a "now reformed" GDR, "since a lot of substance will be lost due to the new travel regulations".

Adhering to the announcement issued today by the press and information service, I answered T[schirlich] that we welcome the opening of the GDR border as a step towards freedom and democracy.

*To be determined:* Should and must the Swiss visa policy in relation to the GDR be revised in light of the most recent events? This also in light of the notification just in from our embassy in Berlin (T[ellex] 72 of 10.11. in attachment<sup>4</sup>), which is likewise being swamped with inquiries.

1 *Memo (translated from German):* Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010A#1999/250#7145\* (B.73.0). Written and signed by Daniel Woker, [dodis.ch/P27996](https://dodis.ch/P27996). Copies to Silvio Arioli, [dodis.ch/P24523](https://dodis.ch/P24523), Klaus Jacobi, [dodis.ch/P19511](https://dodis.ch/P19511), the Federal Office for Foreigners' Affairs, five copies for internal use of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and to the Swiss Embassies in East Berlin and in Bonn.

2 Arnold Tschirlich, [dodis.ch/P54816](https://dodis.ch/P54816), GDR Embassy Counsellor in Bern 27.6.1986–1990.

3 *Memo of the Embassy of the GDR in Bern*, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52350](https://dodis.ch/52350).

4 Telex No. 72 from the Swiss Embassy in East Berlin, 10 November 1989, [dodis.ch/52351](https://dodis.ch/52351).

[dodis.ch/52958](https://dodis.ch/52958)

Netherlands

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas<sup>2</sup>, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek<sup>3</sup>*

BERLIN 9 NOVEMBER 1989 – THE WALL LOSES ITS RELEVANCE

*Extract Confidential*

Bonn, 14 November 1989

[...] <sup>4</sup>

*Report*

“Ab sofort” was the answer of the SED Politburo member responsible for information, Schabowski<sup>5</sup>, after the meeting of the Central Committee on the 9<sup>th</sup> on the question when the arrangement for travel to the Federal Republic and West Berlin that he had just made public would enter into force. A directive that he presumed was already known to the assembled press, but which he himself clearly did not know intimately. The border guards were also unprepared, but confronted by the inflowing masses they threw open the gates at the Borholmer Strasse crossing, stepped back and let the flow of people pass by. Shortly afterwards the other border crossings followed including Checkpoint Charlie. The Wall had – in the words of governing mayor Momper<sup>6</sup> – lost its relevance. On 9 November 1989, this inhuman and monstrous edifice that was founded on 13 August 1961 fell. The cornered leadership of the collapsing “First State of Workers and Farmers on German Soil”<sup>7</sup> had risked the desperate flight forward to stem the bloodletting of “Republikflucht”<sup>8</sup> and regain the trust of the population.

In Berlin (West) this “Day of Re-Encounter”<sup>9</sup> (Momper) led to an emotionally charged cheerfully chaotic exuberant weekend in which nearly two million people from the Eastern Sector and all parts of the GDR flowed into the city. Many with tears in their eyes, hand in hand, elderly, young people, families with children, toddlers and babies (one was even born here), they came in their small two-stroke cars or on foot in a ceaseless flow of people. Some came to reunite with

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 461 (incoming, translated from Dutch): Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs BZ, 5e Blok [NA 2.05.392], inv.nr. 3704.

<sup>2</sup> Jan von der Tas (1928–2009), [dodis.ch/P57557](https://dodis.ch/P57557), Dutch Ambassador in Bonn 1986–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> For the complete version of the document in Dutch cf. [dodis.ch/52958](https://dodis.ch/52958).

<sup>5</sup> Günter Schabowski (1929–2015), [dodis.ch/P56902](https://dodis.ch/P56902), member of the SED Politburo and spokesman of the GDR government 1989.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in German: Erster Arbeiter und Bauernstaat auf deutschem Boden.

<sup>8</sup> Republikflucht: the act of fleeing from the GDR (culpable under GDR legislation).

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in German: Tag des Wiedersehens.

relatives, others for a specific purpose “having my car repaired and taking a beer” – as one of them told me – to shop, but most of them came to establish in person that the incredible had become true and see the forbidden land. Only a few, about 5000, mostly immediate family members of previous refugees, decided to stay. This incredible coming and going led to enormous traffic chaos both in the East at the few border crossings, where most left their cars to cross on foot, and in the West, where the public transport system could barely handle the flow, despite deploying all available resources. The GDR quickly opened new crossings, one of them located on the historically significant Potsdamer Platz in the middle of the “Todesstreifen”<sup>10</sup> on the 12<sup>th</sup>. In about three hours’ time, some 15,000 flower bouquets from the Netherlands were handed out to welcome those from the East at the initiative of the flower trade fair Aalsmeer. It was a gesture witnessed by Federal President Weizsäcker<sup>11</sup> and governing mayor Momper.

The western part of the city responded openly, warmly and enthusiastically. The first people to arrive were showered with champagne and many were welcomed as guests in the house. Special arrangements for the quick payment of the so-called “Begrüßungsgeld” (DM 100 per year per person), special offers of coveted goods in stores (sometimes acceptance of parity between the DM and GDR currency), free concerts and performances, etc. etc. The event, however, focused on the Kurfürstendamm, where visitors flocked to witness the big unknown of capitalist consumption economics with their own eyes. Here a true people’s party of fraternization developed. Striking was the festive but very disciplined and controlled atmosphere.

Below are some points of special significance:

#### *a. Reunification*

A false note was introduced into the festivities by the politicians, namely the CDU and Federal Chancellor Kohl<sup>12</sup>, who could not refrain from emphasizing this theme. This was expressed on the one hand in a sharp disagreement at the Special Session of the Berlin House of Deputies on 10 November in the presence of the Federal Chancellor and the SPD honorary chairman Brandt<sup>13</sup> and Minister Genscher<sup>14</sup> when the CDU and the SPD (the latter under pressure from their coalition partner the AL) could not agree to the text of a joint statement (text by telex). SPD/AL could not go beyond “The House of Representatives of Berlin firmly adheres to the goal of working towards a state of peace and the unity of Europe, in which the German people are also free to determine their coexistence, *on which it decides by exercising its right of self-determination*”<sup>15</sup>. While the CDU insisted on the

<sup>10</sup> Todesstreifen: *the Death Perimeter (on the Eastern side of the Wall)*.

<sup>11</sup> Richard von Weizsäcker (1920–2015), [dodis.ch/P5944](https://dodis.ch/P5944), President of the FRG 1.7.1984–30.6.1994.

<sup>12</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>13</sup> Willy Brandt (1913–1992), [dodis.ch/P15409](https://dodis.ch/P15409), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 3.10.1957–1.12.1966 and Chancellor of the FRG 22.10.1969–7.5.1974.

<sup>14</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in German: das Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin hält fest an dem Ziel auf einen Zustand des Friedens und der Einheit Europas hinzuwirken, in dem auch das deutsche Volk in freier Selbstbestimmung zu der Gestaltung seines Zusammenlebens gelangen kann, für die es sich in Ausübung seines Selbstbestimmungsrecht entscheidet.



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words “*can achieve its unity*”<sup>16</sup> instead of the phrase in italics. Therefore the final text was adopted with only the votes of the SPD/AL.

It was painful that the Chancellor was afterwards whistled at by many of the thousands who were present, but a significant indication of the prevailing mood was that in his speech he later reproached ruling mayor Momper as having spoken of “the people of the GDR”, which led to a sharp exchange of words.

The appeal made by the Berlin CDU leader Diepgen<sup>17</sup>, who also called for the GDR to break down the Wall and open the Brandenburg Gate was a false note.

The visitors and the West Berlin population, did not appear to support this theme. For them it was a meeting, an association and a rediscovery. The rest could wait.

#### *b. Brandenburg Gate*

The only incident of significance occurred on this historic spot. A clear separation here is symbolic for both the political and international legal identity of the GDR. The GDR decision is limited to the broadening of the travel options for its own citizens to the Federal Republic and Berlin (West) and possibly other states. The national border of the independent nation of the GDR will therefore remain unaffected. Attempts by Berlin’s youths to pull down segments of the Wall and occupy the outer Wall at the Brandenburg Gate in the evening hours of 10 November were, from this perspective, border crossings. The GDR responded very cautiously and in a controlled manner. The water cannon gave the young people wet suits but was effective and afterwards posting a detachment of unarmed border troops on the Wall sufficed.

An agreement with the West Berlin police that included a promise that it would counter further disturbances made even this redundant.

#### *c. Cooperation*

The situation that arose as a result of the GDR decree forced the government and public services of both districts to contact and cooperation that was unheard of and which ran counter to many existing regulations. Most characteristic was the joint inauguration of the Potsdamer Platz crossing by reigning mayor Momper and Oberbürgermeister Krack<sup>18</sup> on the morning of 12 November. In their official capacities, they had never previously had any contact with each other. Afterwards, Federal President von Weizsäcker had a conversation with GDR border troops on GDR territory.

The nature of the discussion was pragmatic, the goal an undisturbed and smooth flow of visitor traffic. From the GDR side, breaches were made, stations opened and the West Berlin police, fire brigade and public transport took care of the removal of watchtowers, traffic safety and lines and public transport from the new crossings (sometimes even on GDR territory where for example a West Berlin bus service was extended to Potsdam). An emergency telephone connection between the two police headquarters and contact at the highest level has now

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in German: Seine Einheit erlangen kann.

<sup>17</sup> Eberhard Diepgen (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57478](https://dodis.ch/P57478), Mayor of West Berlin, 1984–16.3.1989.

<sup>18</sup> Erhard Krack (1931–2000), [dodis.ch/P55386](https://dodis.ch/P55386), Mayor of East Berlin 11.2.1974–15.2.1990.

80 become a fact while on the work floor at the crossings the GDR border soldier and the West Berlin policeman stand side by side, beaming enthusiastically.

*d. The Future*

The euphoria will soon fade and then the question will arise how to proceed. From the GDR side the assurance has now been given that all this will not be reversed or adjusted in a limiting sense of the word. However, things, in particular the “non-bureaucratic” conduct of affairs, will have to be replaced by a more regular settlement. This means a continuous flow of visitors who will come to do their shopping here and maybe find employment.

More serious is the danger of illegal exports of scarce GDR consumer goods for illegal trade in Berlin (West). Since a cross-country skiing boot is available over there for 49 GDR mark and the unofficial exchange rate is 1 DM for 10 GDR marks (official parity) this will speak for itself. The ominous word monetary reform, to prevent the “Clearance sale of the GDR”<sup>19</sup> has already been used over there and seems to be a compelling first step towards economic sanitation. Meanwhile interim arrangements and agreements will be required. Here too, intensive cooperation between Senate and GDR authorities will be necessary.

Given that it is not to be expected that the GDR state and (party) leadership will accept that the Soviets will resume their formal role as occupying forces, and in fact the Soviet Union will certainly not be willing to do so, the Allies are now facing a more difficult reconsideration. In some respects they have been passed on the left hand side by developments and can do little else than accept that they too are spectators at events in which they play no role. The situation at Check Point Charlie during the weekend was significant. Between the crowd of West Berliners who rejoiced in welcoming their East German countrymen and fellow city inhabitants, an American, a French and a British military policeman appeared lost in observing the formalities of painstakingly checking returning compatriots (military or civil).

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19 Quoted in German: Ausverkauf der DDR.



[dodis.ch/49563](https://dodis.ch/49563)

Switzerland

*Memo<sup>1</sup> for the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs, René Felber<sup>2</sup>*

GDR: PRESS CONFERENCE

Bern, 14 November 1989

1. Question: Has the government foreseen the events?

– The events have been accelerating in such a way that it has caught everybody unprepared. Chancellor Kohl<sup>3</sup> himself was surprised by the events in Berlin while he was on an official visit to Poland.

2. Question: First impressions and analyses?

– Berlin has given us impressive, moving images: the inhabitants of the GDR have demonstrated that the notion of liberty is such a fundamental value for humanity that it has withstood more than 40 years of implacable dictatorship (failure of “the new man”, designed by the theorists of Marxism-Leninism). And with regard to the human rights, it is this value of free movement of people that Switzerland has defended constantly, notably since the beginnings of the CSCE.

3. Question: How do you judge the future?

– There is still a long way to go, less spectacular maybe than these historic images from Berlin, and it will require perseverance:

a) Advances on the political level: the East German people still await the revision of the first article in the constitution of the GDR, which assures a dominant role for the Communist Party (reconvening of the party congress in mid-December).

b) A long way to go to achieve economic reforms as well.

4. Question: Swiss assistance? (Our actions in favor of Hungary and Poland).

– From now on, it is necessary to think about the GDR as well. Federal Germany will undoubtedly play a crucial role at this level. But let us not forget that the GDR is, economically speaking, in a considerably less difficult situation than Hungary and especially Poland. On the other hand, the GDR still has a long way to go to catch up with these two countries when it comes to democratic liberties.

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (copy, translated from French): Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010-01A#1996/396#843\* (B.58.2). Transmitted to René Felber by Guy Ducrey, [dodis.ch/P15378](https://dodis.ch/P15378): Having heard yesterday evening that you will hold a press conference concerning the latest developments in the GDR, I have taken the liberty of transmitting you hereafter some information and appreciations, which may be useful for you.*

<sup>2</sup> *René Felber (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P24533](https://dodis.ch/P24533), Swiss Foreign Minister 1.1.1988–31.1.1993.*

<sup>3</sup> *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

5. Question: The reunification?

– It is not up to Switzerland to give its opinion on this matter. This is a question that affects both Germanies and which is, of course, of interest to both the US and the USSR. In this regard, one can only welcome the great reticence and the comprehension of all agents involved, both demonstrators as well as leaders. Chancellor Kohl recalled the embedding of the FRG in Western Europe and Mr Genscher<sup>4</sup> stressed that the FRG will respect all the agreements signed and commitments made.

6. Question: GDR–EEC

– A rapprochement is conceivable, but to speak of integration is surely premature. The economic systems are at the moment incompatible. Just look at the difficulties caused by the European Economic Area, and this is between countries that share the same market economy.

7. Question: Yalta Order called into question? Switzerland's security (abolition of the army)?

– The calling into question of the Communist Party's monopoly, the elimination of the dictatorships may – and we hope will – finally erase the ideological barriers. But the military borders, the military facilities are still there, right next to each other. What we are hoping is that the situation will, from now on, facilitate and accelerate the current negotiations concerning arms control (START, CFE). It is not the moment for Switzerland to put the cart before the horse by disarming unilaterally.

8. Question: Bulgaria?

– Zhivkov<sup>5</sup>, Secretary-General of the C[ommunist] P[arty] of Bulgaria has left the scene after having been in power for 37 years. For the moment, it is only the replacement of the main agent; this may be preventive action, announcing upcoming reforms.

9. Question: The Bush<sup>6</sup>-Gorbachev<sup>7</sup> Summit?

– The two presidents will have to observe this development and what is already being called the end of the Yalta Order. Soviet propositions are possible in favor of military cutbacks.

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<sup>4</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>5</sup> Todor Hristov Zhivkov (1911–1998), [dodis.ch/P15343](https://dodis.ch/P15343), Secretary General of the Communist Party of Bulgaria 1954–1989.

<sup>6</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>7</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

[dodis.ch/53170](https://dodis.ch/53170)

Poland

*Minutes of conversation<sup>1</sup> by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

MINUTES OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND PROF. K. SKUBISZEWSKI<sup>2</sup> AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY H.D. GENSCHER<sup>3</sup>, HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 1989  
(SECOND PLENARY SESSION)<sup>4</sup>

After Minister Skubiszewski opened another plenary session on 10 November 1989, the floor was taken by Minister Genscher, who informed the meeting of Chancellor Kohl's<sup>5</sup> decision to interrupt his visit to Poland for about 24 hours following the developments in the GDR (opening of the border with the West and the mass movement of people from the GDR to the FRG). He added that the Chancellor planned to call an extraordinary cabinet meeting and that the Polish side had shown full understanding of his decision.

Next, Minister Genscher declared that in light of the events in the GDR, he wanted to present a position on the matter to the Polish side. After Minister Skubiszewski accepted this departure from the official programme for the session, Minister Genscher discussed the following points:

- Situation following the opening of the border with the West by the GDR; masses of East Germans crossing the border and being given an enthusiastic welcome by FRG and W[est] B[erlin] residents; events had yet again confirmed that the ideal of German unity was alive and that the aspiration of the Germans to live in freedom and democracy had not diminished;

- What had happened in the GDR posed no danger whatsoever to Europe. It also posed no threat to Poland or anyone else. On the contrary, the embrace of change by the GDR could enhance the continent's security and stability. The drive for freedom and democracy should not be considered as a threat, but rather as an important contribution to the stability of European relations;

- No one should exploit the thrust and drama of developments in the GDR; on the contrary, the GDR's neighbours and other countries of the continent ought to show responsibility and far-sightedness;

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes of conversation (translated from Polish):* Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 31/92, w. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>4</sup> This note is part of a comprehensive record (undated) of talks held during Chancellor Kohl's visit, drafted probably on 14 November 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

In these circumstances, Chancellor Kohl's visit to Poland was taking on a new dimension, becoming a symbol of the Polish-German aspirations for freedom.

In his reply, Minister Skubiszewski thanked Minister Genscher for familiarizing the Polish side with the West German position on the GDR. He added that he understood and appreciated Bonn's intentions in this matter. Minister Skubiszewski took the opportunity to share his impressions following a recent visit to the GDR to mark 50 years since the outbreak of World War Two. He recalled the lukewarm reaction to the incumbent state leadership by members of an official march, and the popularity enjoyed in the GDR by Gorbachev<sup>6</sup>, which was manifested by gestures and spontaneous chants "Gorbi, Gorbi."

Then, Minister Skubiszewski referred to Minister Genscher's statement, emphasizing that:

- Poland welcomed the democratization measures adopted by the new GDR leadership;

- The GDR was an important factor in European balance, Poland's close and friendly neighbour, and we took a keen interest in all developments within the GDR. In this context, we were very interested in stabilizing the country for both national and European reasons;

- Events in the GDR had significantly reinvigorated various tendencies related to the possibility of German reunification. We were of the opinion that the changes taking place in the GDR would above all reinforce its sovereignty and identity, while the process set in motion would progress without interruption or difficulty. We recognized the right of all nations, including the Germans, to self-determination. However, one had to bear in mind that the issue of German unity depended on the attitudes of victorious powers on the one hand and on Germany's neighbours and the remaining European countries on the other. In these circumstances, German reunification was not a live issue; it was not on the agenda and could be considered as lying in a distant future.

Adding to his previous statement and commenting on the views presented by Minister Skubiszewski, Minister Genscher pointed out the following:

- The Poles and Germans both lived in Central Europe, making them a significant element of the European balance. Both look back on some painful experiences, which has heightened their sense of responsibility;

- The lost war and the ensuing catastrophe led to the overcoming of nationalism in Germany. That was because the German nation could not overthrow dictatorship on its own and had to be liberated by other countries. This was also why it wanted to preserve the memory of those who had risked their lives to fight against this dictatorship. For this reason, we wanted to honour the anti-Nazi Kreisau Circle<sup>7</sup>. The Bonn offices of the Foreign Office feature a plaque commemo-

<sup>6</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](http://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>7</sup> This reference is to a German anti-Nazi opposition group which operated in the village of Kreisau during World War Two (Kreisau Circle, Polish: Krąg z Krzyżowej, German: Kreisauer Kreis). The group's founder and leader, count Helmuth James von Moltke, was arrested by the Gestapo. Following a death sentence, he was executed in January 1945.

85 rating foreign service members who had been part of that movement and were killed, demonstrating a new sensitivity to nationalism;

– Having drawn lessons from our experience, we were not going to go our own way in Europe. The FRG was permanently anchored in Western European structures and intended to remain in them. In this situation, the Chancellor's visit to Warsaw took on a special European meaning.

Minister Skubiszewski replied that the concept of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Central Europe could not be resurrected, for back then it had served hegemonic purposes. Today, it is no longer possible to mark off a third geopolitical area alongside Eastern and Western Europe, as this would create an additional factor in European relations. Transformation in the East meant that we were back to normal in Europe and thus in international relations. It should be observed, however, that the war that Germany had lost in 1945 caused fundamental territorial changes on the continent, whose inviolability and stability underpinned European security.

Taking the floor, Minister Genscher drew attention to the fact that the FRG made a clear distinction between "reunification" (*Wiedervereinigung*), which did not appear in the Basic Law<sup>8</sup>, and unity, which it was obliged to seek under the constitution. Under no circumstances should this be held to mean an aspiration to restore the former German state. The aspiration to German unity was not of a restorative nature. The only solution to the problem of German unity was a European solution that would not infringe the agreements with Moscow and Warsaw. The line of division running through Germany today was of a double character, for it also divided Europe into two blocs. We wanted to overcome the continent's division and realize German unity by overcoming the continent's division.

Minister Skubiszewski replied by emphasizing that the *Wiedervereinigung* category was not appropriate, expressing as it did the desire to return to a territorial order that had long been outdated. Therefore, it should not be employed. At the same time, he agreed that the developments unfolding in Europe at the time of Chancellor's Kohl visit to Warsaw imparted an additional dimension and symbolism to this trip.

At the end of the talks, Minister Genscher welcomed the Polish-Swedish initiative to convene a conference of the Baltic States' prime ministers with the aim of protecting the Baltic Sea.

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8 This reference is to the constitution of the FRG of 1949.

[dodis.ch/52943](https://dodis.ch/52943)

Israel

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon<sup>2</sup>, to the Israeli Foreign Ministry*

FRG–GDR

Restricted/Urgent

Bonn, 14 November 1989

Under separate cover, priority “Immediate”, a survey on relations between the FRG and the GDR<sup>3</sup>.

Below a paragraph [*of background information*] in preparation for the question in the Knesset:

The question of the reunification of Germany is of interest to Israel only in the context of a rise in German nationalism.

The question of unification is perhaps on the “almost messianic” agenda in Germany but is certainly not on the practical agenda. No one is dealing with it as a practical problem and feelings are very mixed. My recommendation is thus to avoid dire predictions about a powerful wave of German nationalism. I would remind you of the statement by the Republican leader Schönhuber<sup>4</sup> about the East German refugees, “Soll das<sup>5</sup> Pack drüben bleiben” (it would be better that the gang should stay there). If Schönhuber, who has no qualms about exploiting nationalist feelings for his political needs, is not adopting this issue, there is reason to assume that nationalism and reunification in the Germany of today do not necessarily go hand in hand.

<sup>1</sup> Coded telegram (incoming, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives MFA9537/11. Addressed to Europe division 1.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Navon (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57507](https://dodis.ch/P57507), Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, 1989–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram No. 114 from Benjamin Navon to Europe division 1, from 14 November 1989, in the same file.

<sup>4</sup> Franz Schönhuber (1923–2005), [dodis.ch/P54840](https://dodis.ch/P54840), journalist and politician of the FRG, founder and later chairman of The Republicans.

<sup>5</sup> In the original: SOLL GSD PACK DRUEBEN BLEIBEN. The letters “GSD” are most likely a spelling mistake for “das”.

[dodis.ch/52937](https://dodis.ch/52937)

Canada

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth<sup>2</sup>, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs*

THE BERLIN GAME – THE MORNING AFTER

Confidential

Bonn, 15 November 1989

On 14 Nov, Ambassador<sup>3</sup> and public affairs counsellor<sup>4</sup> visited Berlin to form first hand impressions of impact of the extended weekend's politically intoxicating jamboree. Calls included governing mayor of Berlin<sup>5</sup> (see separate report<sup>6</sup>), the UK, USA and French generals<sup>7</sup> heading military government, and editor-in-chief of one of Berlin's two major newspapers, Der Tagesspiegel. We will report more detailed comments in series of telegrams. In the meantime, a few impressions.

2. Fogged in, with only intermittent misty sun and chill wind blowing, Berlin had a distinct hangover look, the crowds and masses of cars of the weekend were gone. So was the joyous atmosphere. Traffic was almost normal. There were only a few GDR cars and Kudamm crowds were only slightly heavier than usual. But Berlin authorities were anticipating that last weekend will usher in further rounds of the Berlin carnival, even if perhaps not as boisterous and emotional in future, and with smaller crowds – now that everyone in East Berlin is used to the idea that they can “get out”. Reality of limited housing, problem of getting a new job, lack of money, prospect of moving away from friends and family, as well as a kind of personal as opposed to political pride, appeared to be imposing sober second thoughts on many East Germans, even if the attractions of West Berlin were still a bit dazzling.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. ZQGR1482 (incoming): Global Affairs Canada file 25-3-3-5-Germany / Confidential. Info to Moscow, Washington, London, Paris, Paris-OECD, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Rome, Hague, Oslo, Brussels-EEC, Brussels, Brussels-NATO, Canadian Military Representation to NATO, Vienna, Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Warsaw, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Permanent Mission in New York, Geneva, Prague, Privy Council Office, Office of the Prime Minister, National Defense Headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas W. Delworth (1929–2012), [dodis.ch/P51338](https://dodis.ch/P51338), Canadian Ambassador in Bonn 1987–1992.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas W. Delworth.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Advokaat, [dodis.ch/P57645](https://dodis.ch/P57645), Public affairs counsellor of the Canadian Embassy in Bonn.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991.

<sup>6</sup> Not located.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Corbett (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57445](https://dodis.ch/P57445), Commandant of the British Sector of Berlin 1.1989–10.1990.

Raymond E. Haddock (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57444](https://dodis.ch/P57444), Commandant of the US Sector of Berlin 1.6.1988–2.10.1990. François Cann (\*1932), [dodis.ch/P57446](https://dodis.ch/P57446), Commandant of the French Sector of Berlin 1987–1990.



3. Reality was also imposing its discipline on chaotic images of weekend. Although there are more and more holes in it, and although it has thus lost much of its malevolent psychological power, the Wall remains. Neither Germany nor Berlin have been re-united. Contrary to the popular press headlines of the weekend: "Berlin is at last a single city once more." After the laissez-faire chaos of weekend, which acted as a welcome stabilizing safety valve, GDR authorities were slowly re-exerting control at the checkpoints, insisting on visas which, however, were being issued routinely with a minimum of delay. At Potsdamer Platz checkpoint, subdued and business-like East Germans could be seen patiently waiting in relatively short lines for documentation, and then trickling across the no-mans-land into West Berlin, almost as if it were normal practice. While movement of people east and west has been liberalized, nothing has changed for travellers west to east and, above all, the frontiers remain. Indeed, Soviet spokesmen have made respect for the existing frontier a *sine qua non* for Soviet acquiescence in developments. French interlocutor hailed victory of West in Cold War, not least due to Western solidarity, but USA general cautioned that from perspective of protecting powers, we were only at mid-point of a marathon, not end of the race, and the need for patience, coordination and firmness remained as great as ever.

4. Significantly, the most powerful emotional symbol of division of Germany, the Wall at the Brandenburg gate, remains and attracts the fascinated interest of crowds and media crews. Krenz<sup>8</sup> has been making noises about opening this entry too, since he knows its value as a symbolic gesture and we expect that it too will become a new crossing point in near future.

5. Perhaps most surprising aspect of what some perceive as the primitive beginnings of German reunification was the lack of violence and quintessential German orderliness of crowds. Despite an influx of 2.4 million visitors, order was maintained, with little vandalism or crime and few disturbances or injuries. Cars filed into city in orderly lines and parked in as orderly a fashion as possible. The crowds, like revellers who can scarcely believe their good fortune, remain good-natured, if boisterous. The only possible danger points emerged at Potsdamer Platz where crowd had reached critical mass and might have exploded had not East German border guards given up any pretense of control, and at the Brandenburg Gate where crowds climbing Wall were removed by West German police with the agreement of UK authorities for fear that one false step or an accidental slip might set off a riot.

6. From our discussions, some consensus appeared to be emerging that trigger from historic 09 Nov event was announcement by GDR government spokesman Schabowski<sup>9</sup> following Politburo meeting on 09 Nov that frontier was now open. Message was picked up first in West Berlin and was then relayed back to GDR by western media. Incredulous crowds began to gather at Wall and checkpoints, quickly reaching critical mass. Given a serious breakdown of lines of authority within GDR government, which extended to frontier guards as well, latter were

<sup>8</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

<sup>9</sup> Günter Schabowski (1929–2015), [dodis.ch/P56902](https://dodis.ch/P56902), member of the SED Politburo and spokesman of the GDR government 1989.



89 not willing to oppose masses without orders and simply gave up. Once the first crowds surged westward, GDR authorities realized that to try to stem tide would be suicidal and very wisely let the situation go in order to blow off almost a half century's pent-up steam.

7. On the morning after, so to speak, Berlin was beginning to face up to implications of a more open frontier. Invasion of badly engineered East German cars had created massive pollution and traffic problems – all of which is anathema to the Greens at the best of times, and they are now an essential element in the city governing coalition with the SPD. The city could not be expected to continue its generous attitude to hordes of East Germans lacking hard currency. Fears and opposition to new arrivals over housing, jobs and social services are growing, not least since latest refugees, in contrast to young, well-trained professionals who had fled west via CSSR and Hungary, included heavy admixture of the dregs of East German society. Notwithstanding natural optimism and resilience of Berliners, the thought of who would pay for last week's party (and how) was beginning to trouble many. As an example, Berlin banks which had financed the enormous demands for the 100 DM welcoming payment made to all East German newcomers on first arrival were already demanding that Bonn not only replace funds immediately but pay interest and extra costs of processing. The party, indeed, was over. But nothing on the other hand would ever be the same again in Berlin and in the Federal Republic, as well, of course, as in the East.

[dodis.ch/52918](https://dodis.ch/52918)

United Kingdom

*Minutes<sup>1</sup> of the 34th Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street  
on 15 November 1989 at 9.30 a.m.*

*Extract Secret*

[...]²

*Foreign Affairs: German Democratic Republic*

3. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary³ said that events in East Germany had moved very rapidly, particularly following the measures taken to introduce freer travel between East and West Berlin. The key question now was whether the East German government would agree to hold free elections. Their intentions were still obscure. The new Prime Minister, Herr Hans Modrow⁴, the former Party Secretary in Dresden, had been elected on 13 November. He had the reputation of a reformer. The Party Congress had been brought forward to 15/17 December. This was bound to be a crucially important occasion. The opposition groups were pressing for free elections, but did not want these to take place immediately since they were not yet ready. There had been intensive diplomatic activity as events in East Germany unfolded. The Prime Minister⁵ had been in close touch with other allied leaders. Despite excessive press speculation, allied governments had react-

1 Minutes: UK National Archives CAB 128/94. Present at this meeting were: Margaret Thatcher (Prime Minister), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Geoffrey Howe (Lord President of the Council), [dodis.ch/P54804](https://dodis.ch/P54804), James Mackay (Lord Chancellor), [dodis.ch/P57494](https://dodis.ch/P57494), Douglas Hurd (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), John Major (Chancellor of the Exchequer), [dodis.ch/P57495](https://dodis.ch/P57495), David Waddington (Secretary of State for the Home Department), [dodis.ch/P57484](https://dodis.ch/P57484), Peter Walker (Secretary of State for Wales), [dodis.ch/P50851](https://dodis.ch/P50851), Norman Fowler (Secretary of State for Employment), [dodis.ch/P57485](https://dodis.ch/P57485), Tom King (Secretary of State for Defence), [dodis.ch/P57496](https://dodis.ch/P57496), Nicholas Ridley (Secretary of State for Trade and Industry), [dodis.ch/P48293](https://dodis.ch/P48293), Kenneth Baker (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), [dodis.ch/P57498](https://dodis.ch/P57498), Kenneth Clarke (Secretary of State for Health), [dodis.ch/P57486](https://dodis.ch/P57486), John MacGregor (Secretary of State for Education and Science), [dodis.ch/P57500](https://dodis.ch/P57500), Malcom Rifkind (Secretary of State for Scotland), [dodis.ch/P57487](https://dodis.ch/P57487), Cecil Parkinson (Secretary of State for Transport), [dodis.ch/P55897](https://dodis.ch/P55897), John Wakeham (Secretary of State for Energy), [dodis.ch/P57488](https://dodis.ch/P57488), John Gazoni (Lord Privy Seal), [dodis.ch/P55622](https://dodis.ch/P55622), Antony Newton (Secretary of State for Social Security), [dodis.ch/P57490](https://dodis.ch/P57490), Christopher Patten (Secretary of State for the Environment), [dodis.ch/P57499](https://dodis.ch/P57499), Peter Brooke (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), [dodis.ch/P57491](https://dodis.ch/P57491), John Gummer (Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), [dodis.ch/P57501](https://dodis.ch/P57501) and Norman Lamont (Chief Secretary, Treasury), [dodis.ch/P57502](https://dodis.ch/P57502).

2 For the complete version of the document cf. [dodis.ch/52918](https://dodis.ch/52918).

3 Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

4 Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

5 Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.

ed steadily and with caution. This had emerged clearly at the Western European Union Ministerial meeting on 13/14 November. The French President, M. Francois Mitterrand<sup>6</sup>, had organised a meeting of European Community (EC) leaders on 18 November. It was to be hoped that EC leaders would express their support and welcome for the changes taking place in Eastern Europe while agreeing on the need for a careful and steadfast approach, based on existing well-trying institutions. Account had to be taken of the position of the Soviet President, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev.<sup>7</sup> He faced a difficult situation but it was very much in the interests of Western governments that he should remain in power. The question of German reunification was extremely sensitive. Given the German Constitution and political life in West Germany, it was inevitable that there should be some discussion of reunification. All the allied governments had been committed to this general principle for many years. At the same time no-one in a position of influence in the West or East believed that reunification was likely to happen rapidly, or that this would be desirable in the near future. This view was also shared by reformers inside East Germany. President Mitterrand's purpose in organising the meeting on 18 November was probably to try to dispose of developments in Eastern Europe before the European Council meeting in Strasbourg on 8/9 November. This was unrealistic. Much was likely to happen in the intervening period before the European Council. Moreover, these issues were so important for the future of the EC that they would need to be discussed again in depth at the European Council. Nevertheless, on the whole the allied response in Eastern Europe had been sensible and prudent.

In discussion, the following points were made:

a) A clear framework for dealing with the changes in Eastern Europe had been laid down, most recently in the Prime Minister's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet on 13 November. It was essential to maintain existing institutions, especially the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Ministers should not raise the issue of German reunification, which was not an immediate issue. Progress had already been achieved on strengthening the EC's economic relations with East European countries. The EC had signed trade agreements with Poland and Hungary, and an association agreement with Yugoslavia. In due course Poland and Hungary might want to negotiate association agreements. Such a development was unlikely to cause major problems for the Soviet leadership. If events moved too quickly or Western governments did not continue to take a measured and prudent attitude, there was a risk that President Gorbachev might be swept away. This would cause grave damage to the broader Western objective of promoting democracy throughout both parts of Europe, and ultimately from the Atlantic through the Soviet Union to the borders of China. The EC could not ignore these crucially important processes of historic change which would have a profound effect on developments within the Community.

<sup>6</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

<sup>7</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

b) The West German Finance Minister, Herr Waigel<sup>8</sup>, had made clear both in the formal and informal meetings of the Economic and Finance Council on 13 November that West Germany saw its future as remaining an integral member of the EC and Western Europe. Herr Waigel had emphasised that West Germany was not seeking reunification at the present time. The same line had been taken by the West German Foreign Minister, Herr Genscher<sup>9</sup>, and the Defence Minister, Herr Stoltenberg<sup>10</sup>, at the Western European Union Ministerial meeting. Nevertheless, these statements contrasted with the greater attention paid to the theme of reunification by Chancellor Kohl<sup>11</sup> in recent speeches, though it should be remembered that he had always been one of the foremost advocates of reunification among German political leaders.

c) Against this background, the West German government was likely to show an increasing tendency to examine new proposals for greater integration within the EC in the light of the implications for closer relations between East and West Germany and eventual reunification. In certain cases this tendency might be helpful to Britain's own interests.

d) In reality there were already close links between East and West Germany. West German companies were able to take advantage of cheap labour in East Germany in their manufacturing processes. Goods from East Germany were admitted to West Germany, and hence into the EC, without tariffs or quotas. Hitherto West German companies had been deterred from major investment in East Germany because of the political situation there. The recent changes were likely to stimulate a significant flow of new West German investment in East Germany. The Polish and Hungarian governments had stressed recently that they attached importance to securing increased investment from Britain and other EC countries to maintain the preponderant weight of West German trade and investment flows. On the other hand, East Germany and the other reforming East European countries would have great difficulty in practice in implementing the structural changes necessary to create genuine market economies based on private enterprise. This was likely to be a long process.

e) West Germany had a trade surplus of £35 billion with the rest of the EC in 1988. Closer economic links between East and West Germany would present a formidable challenge to the other members of the EC. With a combined population of nearly 80 million people this economic entity would have a major distorting effect on EC projects for closer economic and financial unity and the concept of a Single Market. The EC could not afford to ignore the EC's relations with the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). The EC's import standards would need to be maintained both in relation to East Germany and EFTA.

<sup>8</sup> Theo Waigel (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P54838](https://dodis.ch/P54838), Finance Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–27.10.1998.

<sup>9</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>10</sup> Gerhard Stoltenberg (1928–2001), [dodis.ch/P46108](https://dodis.ch/P46108), Defence Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–1.4.1992.

<sup>11</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

- 93 *The Prime Minister* summing up the discussion, said that it was of cardinal importance for Western governments that all these complex questions should be handled carefully and prudently. Allied governments should remain in close touch, especially Britain, France and the United States who had Four Power rights and obligations. Although Western governments had taken a formal position since 1955 in favour of East German self-determination, German reunification should not be treated as an immediate issue. Governments should take due account of the implications of the present turn of events for President Gorbachev's position. A change in the Soviet leadership would inflict major damage on the prospects for the further spread of democracy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The EC would need to discuss these issues in depth both at President Mitterrand's dinner and at the European Council in Strasbourg. EC member states could not simply concentrate on internal developments within the Community without taking account of trends in Europe as a whole. A single European currency was no answer to these wider changes. Although events were moving in a favourable direction, Europe faced a difficult decade ahead.

[dodis.ch/52949](https://dodis.ch/52949)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Memo<sup>1</sup> for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher<sup>2</sup>*

US REACTION TO THE EVENTS IN BERLIN AND THE GDR SINCE 9 NOVEMBER

*Extract*

Bonn, 16 November 1989

*For information (ahead of the forthcoming talks in Washington<sup>3</sup>)*

1. The events in Berlin and the GDR have *dominated the US media* for days. Interest in Germany and German/European-US relations has increased enormously among the public (top TV journalists have been sent to Berlin; evening news programmes have been broadcast in front of the Wall, with clips of historic scenes; there have been special features in the “Washington Post” and “New York Times” and Ambassador Ruhfus<sup>4</sup> has given several TV interviews). Moving scenes (cheering, joy, spontaneous celebrations) and highly symbolic images (the Wall, Brandenburg Gate, people embracing and shedding tears of joy) reflect Americans’ tendency to be emotional and preference for images. A *large wave of sympathy* has gripped the entire country. This is of great help to our public diplomacy work and we should certainly make use of it. The Embassy and German Information Centres are working flat out to do so. The large number of requests for interviews provides a unique opportunity for Federal Government officials to present Germany and its policies to a broad and receptive US audience.

2. The resounding echo in the media and among the US public made the *Administration’s reaction*, which largely reflects our own, look rather subdued in contrast. The focus is on realism, safeguarding stability and, most importantly, preserving unity in NATO. On the evening of 9 November, Bush<sup>5</sup> said (in Baker’s<sup>6</sup> presence and with no expression on his face) that he was “very pleased” about

1 *Memo (translated from German): Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA B 32, Bd. 179532, file reference 204-322.00 D. Written by Gebhardt von Moltke, [dodis.ch/P57380](https://dodis.ch/P57380) and Eberhard Kölsch, [dodis.ch/P57381](https://dodis.ch/P57381) and signed by Gebhardt von Moltke and Frank Lambach, [dodis.ch/P57395](https://dodis.ch/P57395). Seen on 16 November 1989 by Karl Heinz Kuhna, [dodis.ch/P57382](https://dodis.ch/P57382) and Dieter Kastrup, [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383), on 17 November 1989 by Jürgen Sudhoff, [dodis.ch/P57384](https://dodis.ch/P57384) and on 20 November 1989 by Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Munich–Berlin, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 22.*

2 *Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.*

3 *Hans-Dietrich Genscher held talks in Washington on 20 and 21 November 1989.*

4 *Jürgen Rufus (1930–2018), [dodis.ch/P57385](https://dodis.ch/P57385), Ambassador of the FRG in Washington 16.11.1987–31.8.1992.*

5 *George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.*

6 *James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.*

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the opening of the GDR borders. He praised the Federal Government for having “done a magnificent job”, but was reserved about further developments and said it was “way too early” to speak about reunification. Asked why he did not seem to be “elated”, Bush said he was “just not an emotional kind of guy”.

On the following day, *Baker* said he was “extremely happy”; however, in interviews he described an implied connection between the events and reunification as “premature” (10.11.1989 MacNeil/Lehrer<sup>7</sup>). For his part, Vice-President Quayle<sup>8</sup> has said that “the reunification of Germany is inevitable”.

There are *three reasons* for Bush and Baker’s cautious statements:

- the *desire* to signal to the Soviet Union in the run-up to the summit near Malta that the US does not wish to see the *stability of developments* in Central and East Europe and Gorbachev’s<sup>9</sup> position in light of critics of his reform process *endangered* by thoughtless expressions of feelings of triumph. Bush and Baker are thus interpreting Gorbachev’s concerns correctly (cf. Gorbachev’s message to Bush on the night of 10/11 November, in which he said that he was “very concerned about the possibility of destabilisation”; similar reaction by Ambassador Kotchemasov<sup>10</sup> in a meeting with Ambassador Walters<sup>11</sup> in East Berlin on 11 November.) Referring explicitly to *your telephone call* (10 November), Baker underlined that the development in the GDR was also an *achievement resulting from the united stance shown by the US and NATO* (10.11. MacNeil/Lehrer, 12.11. Brinkley<sup>12</sup>). Secretary of Defence Cheney<sup>13</sup> reacted in a similar, but more forceful way;

- *concern* that a more emphatic reaction would inevitably lead to the question of *practical measures* to support reform in the GDR, with *financial implications* – and at a time when the Administration was being criticised for not providing enough financial support for the reform process in Poland and Hungary.

- Bush and Baker’s *characters* and governing style based on a case-by-case approach to crisis management, which deliberately refrains from using far-reaching concepts.

The *summit with Gorbachev* on 2 and 3 December has become even more relevant on account of the events in the GDR. The Administration is doing everything it can to counteract the impression that it wants to make decisions over the allies’ heads at this summit on far-reaching arrangements on a postwar order in Central Europe. On the other hand, Bush’s and Baker’s reactions, as far as we have seen so far, *merely hint* that the West already has a concept for a European peace order

7 The US journalists Robert MacNeil (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P57386](https://dodis.ch/P57386) and Jim Lehrer (\*1934), [dodis.ch/P57387](https://dodis.ch/P57387), hosted The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour on the TV channel PBS.

8 Dan Quayle (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57388](https://dodis.ch/P57388), Vice-President of the United States, 1989–1993.

9 Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

10 Vyacheslav Kotchemasov (1918–1998), [dodis.ch/P57389](https://dodis.ch/P57389), Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin 1983–1990.

11 Vernon A. Walters (1917–2002), [dodis.ch/P54605](https://dodis.ch/P54605) US Ambassador in Bonn 1989–1991.

12 The US journalist David Brinkley (1920–2003), [dodis.ch/P57390](https://dodis.ch/P57390), hosted the news broadcast This Week on the TV channel ABC.

13 Dick Cheney (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57391](https://dodis.ch/P57391), United States Secretary of Defense 21.3.1989–28.6.1992.



96 and proven instruments for West East dialogue in the form of the *Harmel Report*<sup>14</sup> and the *CSCE process*.

The Administration has not commented so far on the German side's (Bahr<sup>15</sup>, Geiger<sup>16</sup>; Gaus<sup>17</sup>) *proposal to hold a four-power conference on Germany*.

[...] <sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Report of the Council on the Future Tasks of the Alliance (Harmel Report) of 13 and 14 December 1967, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_67927.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67927.htm).

<sup>15</sup> Egon Bahr (1922–2015), [dodis.ch/P39530](https://dodis.ch/P39530), Member of the SPD.

<sup>16</sup> Michaela Geiger (1943–1988), [dodis.ch/P57392](https://dodis.ch/P57392), Member of the CSU and Bundestag 1980–1998.

<sup>17</sup> Günter Gaus (1929–2004), [dodis.ch/P55113](https://dodis.ch/P55113), Journalist.

<sup>18</sup> For the complete version of the document in German cf. [dodis.ch/52949](https://dodis.ch/52949).



[dodis.ch/52912](https://dodis.ch/52912)

United States

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush<sup>2</sup>*

THE SOVIETS AND THE GERMAN QUESTION

Secret

Washington, D.C., 29 November 1989

This paper responds to your request for further analysis of the Soviet Union's policy toward Germany in light of changes in the GDR and Eastern Europe.

Soviet policy toward Germany is – like everything else – in a state of flux. The Soviets have lost control of their policy toward Eastern Europe and are largely reacting to events on a day to day basis. Gorbachev<sup>3</sup> foresaw neither the pace nor the direction of change there and is increasingly powerless to do anything about it. The threat of the use of Soviet military power to reverse events increasingly lacks credibility and no one knows where Moscow's tolerance will end.

The Soviet reaction to events in the GDR is the clearest indication to date that Moscow has come to believe that peaceful economic and political change is the only alternative to a popular explosion. Earlier Gorbachev probably hoped that reform in these countries would take place within the boundaries of a single party system – a kind of mirror of Soviet perestroika. But he was mistaken.

The GDR is not Poland or Hungary and the likelihood of a noncommunist East Germany has reopened the long dormant core issue of Soviet security – the German question. If the communists lose power in the GDR, the rationale for a divided Germany goes away. Yet the reunification of Germany would rip the heart out of the Soviet security system since East Germany and the 390,000 Soviet forces based on its territory constitute the fulcrum of the Warsaw Pact.

Gorbachev's communication to you on the issue of German reunification was unequivocal – he emphasized the “political realities of the postwar era, namely the existence of two German states.”

The reunification of Germany conjures up deeply held memories and residual fears of repeated German invasions of Russia and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's worst nightmare is a reunified Germany allied with NATO or, alternatively, nominally allied with the West and heavily militarized. The Warsaw Pact, having lost its East German anchor, would quickly disintegrate and the Soviet line of defense would begin at the Ukrainian border. A companion fear is that this

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum*: Bush Presidential Library 91116-001. Signed by Brent Scowcroft, [dodis.ch/P57408](https://dodis.ch/P57408).

<sup>2</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

reunified Germany would be able to dominate East-Central Europe economically, including a weak Soviet Union.

No Soviet leader can allow German reunification on these terms: The gains of World War II, achieved at the cost of 20 million lives, would be gone.

The best outcome for Moscow would be the continued existence of two viable German states. The GDR would reform politically and economically, maintain its identity and develop closer economic and political ties with FRG. The continued existence of two German states would allow the GDR to anchor the Warsaw Pact, keeping the Soviet security system nominally intact. At the same time, Moscow would enjoy not only the benefits of direct economic cooperation with the FRG but the contribution of an improved East German economy to COMECON.

The problem for Moscow now is to design a new policy to promote a favorable outcome when Soviet control over events in Eastern Europe is weak. The Soviets can still use force to stop unwelcomed events. Were there instability and violence in the GDR, the Soviets would most certainly act to protect the 390,000 Soviet troops stationed there. But short of that, it is hard to imagine a pretext for the use of Soviet force which would not discredit perestroika. Even a Soviet response to instability in the GDR carries risks for Gorbachev since the use of force, whatever its rationale, would destroy the chances for full Soviet economic and political rapprochement with the FRG.

Moscow's most likely diplomatic approach is to try and blunt the impact of change in the GDR by solidifying international support for two German states. Betting that there is little true enthusiasm for German reunification in the West – particularly in France and Britain – the Soviets would take every opportunity to stabilize the existing system of alliances while holding out the "common European home" as the promised end-point. While Soviet rhetoric might continue to call for the dissolution of blocs, we could expect a constant stream of new proposals for alliance to alliance talks and negotiations. Gorbachev might even use the CFE process, with its timetable for partial withdrawal of U.S. and Soviet forces, to give the Soviet presence a longer life in Europe than it might have if pressures for Soviet withdrawal grow from the populations of Eastern Europe. Finally, we could expect Soviet efforts to strengthen the CSCE's role in inter-German affairs and European security in order to draw upon the angst of smaller European states about a stronger Germany. But like Gorbachev's earlier tactics toward Eastern Europe, this policy is likely to fail too.

There is currently no evidence of panic in Moscow on the German issue but if the Soviets begin to see their influence over European affairs deteriorating more rapidly, Gorbachev could revert to Soviet calls from the 1950s for a general treaty on collective security in Europe or a German peace treaty. The goal would be to regain control of the pace and form of German reunification. The Soviets might count on the British and French as natural allies in delaying German reunification or pushing it toward confederation.

Gorbachev will come to Malta with these issues uppermost in his mind. There is, to date, no evidence that the Soviets have worked out a new policy toward Eastern Europe or Germany. As one Soviet commentator recently remarked, the

- 99       Soviets have decided that their security interests are not served by the Brezhnev<sup>4</sup> doctrine's emphasis on preservation of the leading role of the Party in Eastern Europe. They have not, however, defined a new set of limits. Reformers in Eastern Europe seem to believe that membership in the Warsaw Pact is Moscow's last line in the sand. But reform in the GDR and the attendant specter of German reunification call even that requirement into question. That is why the German question is – in a way that it has not been for many years – high on the Soviet security agenda and they are clearly uncertain about how best to protect their interests over the long-term.

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<sup>4</sup> Leonid Brezhnev (1906–1982), [dodis.ch/P15543](https://dodis.ch/P15543), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 14.10.1964–10.11.1982, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 16.6.1977–10.11.1982.

[dodis.ch/53171](https://dodis.ch/53171)

Poland

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Polish Ambassador in Cologne, Ryszard Karski<sup>2</sup>, to the Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bolesław Kulski<sup>3</sup>*

Immediately

Cologne<sup>4</sup>, 29 November 1989, 6.20 p.m.

Assessment of Chancellor Kohl's<sup>5</sup> 10-point "German policy" programme presented at the Bundestag on 29 November (résumé by diplomatic cable, full version 29 November<sup>6</sup>).

1. Kohl's address marks a new quality in Bonn's reunification policy, a transition to its operative and concrete phase.

2. The programme he set out involves the creation of a political and economic infrastructure, the concept of confederation followed by federation of the two states (while pursuing the aim of full reunification of Germany), but without defining a specific timeframe. The vision is very compelling and broad, without precluding any modifications and other solutions heading in the same direction.

3. Kohl's concept meets the expectations of West German political circles and its public; it allows the Chancellor and government to seize the initiative on this subject matter, both with respect to the GDR and internal politics of the FRG. Given the broad support for the programme from all major political parties (except for the "Greens"), it can be viewed as a national mission.

4. Kohl's political and – crucially – economic offer addressed to the GDR (immediate assistance in many fields, substantial increase in such assistance in the future, facilitating links with the EEC) on condition of fundamental and irreversible internal changes in the GDR is aimed at invigorating and enhancing reunification sentiments among the public and the political circles of the GDR (notably in view of discussions ahead of a convention of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), and the important decisions about further development at home and relations with the FRG). Special importance is attached to free elections in the hope that they will change power relations and make it easier for Bonn to achieve its objectives.

5. It is apparent that Kohl is making a strong connection between reunification and a future European architecture, the CSCE and disarmament process,

1 Telegram No. 0-2787/IV (incoming, translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, ZD 24/91, w. 11, w. 37. Delivered by: 30 November 1989, 12.20 a.m.

2 Ryszard Karski (\*1926), [dodis.ch/P57590](https://dodis.ch/P57590), Polish Ambassador in Cologne 1987–1990.

3 Bolesław Kulski, [dodis.ch/P50550](https://dodis.ch/P50550), Polish Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 1988–1990.

4 The Polish Embassy in the FRG was situated in Cologne.

5 Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

6 Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 31/92, w. 2.

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and W[estern] E[uropean] integration so as to alleviate widespread concerns (harboured also by the Allies) that the integration of both German states is proceeding too quickly and could slip out of control. However, the very fact that Bonn has introduced such an initiative at this stage is due to a belief that is gaining ground in the FRG whereby both the East (including the USSR) and the West are less and less capable of slowing down the dynamic process towards reunification. At the same time, attempts are being made to create an impression that Bonn's current actions are being taken with the consent of the main Allies, including the USSR (as suggested by Teltschik<sup>7</sup> at an internal briefing for leading West German journalists on 27 November).

6. From the Polish point of view, it is unfavourable that guarantees for the Oder-Neisse border should be completely left aside (even though Bonn is aware of Poland's strong position, which was communicated during Kohl's visit, and the fact that the FRG's allies – especially France – have been raising this issue). Practical implementation of the programme outlined, which gives absolute priority to relations with the GDR, creates the prospect – despite official assurances – of our country being side-lined in FRG policy (especially in economic collaboration) behind the GDR, USSR and CSSR.

In the present situation, we believe that it would be advisable to:

- Consider reiterating the Polish position, notably by highlighting territorial guarantees as one of the fundamental conditions for any further examination of the development of the “German problem”;
- Step up efforts to coordinate views on this subject matter with the most interested stakeholders in the East and West.

It is especially important that the broadest possible consensus should be built at home over German affairs, which are of vital importance to the nation and state.

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7 Horst M. Teltschik (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57413](https://dodis.ch/P57413), Foreign policy advisor to the Chancellor of the FRG.

[dodis.ch/52929](https://dodis.ch/52929)

Austria

*Memorandum of conversation<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Federal Chancellery*

CONVERSATION OF THE CHANCELLOR<sup>2</sup> WITH PRIME MINISTER MODROW<sup>3</sup>, 24.11.1989

Vienna, 2 Dezember 1989

Prime Minister Modrow thanks at the outset for this visit, which is particularly important given the current situation in the GDR and is thus highly appreciated.

First, the following has to be said concerning the GDR's internal situation:

The resignation of the old government and the initiation of reform measures were delayed beyond any comprehensible extent. This caused the population, especially the "youth fraction", to become active, and the resignation of the old and the formation of the new government have taken place against a backdrop of massive demonstrations and rallies. There has been little time for him to form a government and create a program of action.

As a first step, he decided to reduce the government (coalition distribution 28:11). This was a good decision, which also found public approval. The debate on the election of the new executive committee and the questioning of the old government in the People's Chamber were also good because a lot of steam was discharged this way. He is aware that he was being given great trust, which could be taken away at any time. Now it is necessary to turn this leap of faith into real trust.

The political situation in the country is very complicated. The established sources of political influence are no longer significant. In rallies and demonstrations, new political movements and forces that must now be included have articulated. He had made the offer of a round table, which was more or less accepted. He considers this an important part of his political work. On the one hand, you must respond to the mood of the country, on the other hand you need all political forces to be involved in a role of responsibility. It is not acceptable that a large group should be content with only questioning those responsible.

For all reform measures, economic stability is the prerequisite and given the economic situation of the GDR, foreign economic relations are especially mean-

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum of conversation (translated from German):* Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1989, GZ. 518.01.12/89. Written by Eva Nowotny, [dodis.ch/P57522](https://dodis.ch/P57522); also published in Wilson Center, doc. [165715](https://dodis.ch/P57522). Forwarded to the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister on 4 December 1989. The Head of the Cabinet Emil Staffelmayer took notice and forwarded the memorandum to the Political Section. No further circulation was initiated.

<sup>2</sup> Franz Vranitzky (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57523](https://dodis.ch/P57523), Chancellor of Austria 16.6.1986–28.1.1997.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

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ingful. Austria has always been an important partner for the GDR. Relations have been sustained with continuity and trust and must further develop on this basis.

Among the socialist countries, the overall economic development of the GDR offers the most favorable conditions for a process of renewal, but with regard to contents a new mobilization must take place. Some instruments of the modern economy that had been rejected by the former government now have to be implemented – especially terms such as joint ventures, transfer of capital, etc.

It is of utmost importance to gradually change the bureaucratically encrusted centralized management of the economy, however, in a step-by-step process to avoid instability.

Moreover, it is necessary to renew the societal system as a socialist one, therefore a program of legal decisions and a list of legislation to be enacted were created. The parliament will have a lot of work to do in the next few weeks. The People's Chamber has already appointed two commissions, one that has been assigned to deal with the amendments to the constitution (for example, rephrasing the leadership role of the working class, creation of a constitutional court), and the other to draw up a new electoral law.

In foreign policy, he attaches great importance to European policy. This particular priority for European initiatives is new in the overall design of foreign policy. Also in this sense, the visit of the Chancellor is especially important. Of course, all alliance relations will be maintained, and relations with the USSR will remain especially important because of the mutual economic interdependence.

Regarding relations with the FRG, it was felt in the exploratory talks with Seiters<sup>4</sup> that an important stage of work is still necessary. The constant meddling by the FRG showed that there was little trust in and respect for the sovereignty of the GDR.

Of course, the decision in favour of an open border has qualitatively changed the situation. The offer of the GDR has been put forward, and it has coined the term "treaty community" – how broad and how versatile this treaty community might be remains to be explored.

Trade and economic relations with Austria have developed well, and we are very interested in its continuation. This is underscored by Austria's high level of participation at the Autumn Fair and the interest of Austrian entrepreneurs. We expect to go on working with continuity and stability. Given the annual framing contract, we have gone the farthest with Austria in the development of economic relations.

The Chancellor expressed his thanks for the comprehensive and frank presentation. Relations between Austria and the GDR are excellent in all areas, including culture and tourism, and the framework agreement is a good signal that this should continue in the future. In the economic sphere, Austria attaches great importance to cooperation in environmental technology, and it would like to develop some such initiatives. The Chancellor then gave a short overview of the outstanding Austrian economic development, as well as Austrian integration policy, and referred in this context to Austria's adherence to neutrality and its neutrality

<sup>4</sup> Rudolf Seiters (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57431](https://dodis.ch/P57431), Head of the Office of the Chancellery and Minister for Special Affairs of the FRG 1989–1991.



policy, which is very important at present given the transformation in the Eastern European neighboring countries.

The Chancellor mentioned that he had heard an ORF<sup>5</sup> interview with Mr. Krenz<sup>6</sup> upon his departure, where he was confronted with the question of German reunification. Krenz expressed his opinion that it was not an urgent interest for the people of the GDR. Austria sees this primarily as a decision that has to be made by the German states and would also respect this decision. On the other hand, one needs to take the pan-European context into consideration, and in this sense, the decisions made by the CSCE on the stability of Europe.

The transition to a plurality of the political spectrum and its constitutional anchoring has triggered much active interest and sympathy in Austria, which would also have an impact on cooperation and support. With the “East-West Fund”, a new structure for financial cooperation has been found that offers a sound basis for joint investment projects and joint ventures, etc. Austria would also actively engage in international forums in favor of Eastern European countries. Unfortunately, Austria recently lost some economic projects in the GDR (for example, Buna<sup>7</sup>, Leuna<sup>8</sup>), and especially in the light of this he would like to emphasize Austria’s interest in strengthening economic cooperation.

Prime Minister Modrow then briefly explained his position on the issue of reunification. This has various aspects: on the one hand, it corresponds with a natural human need, but on the other hand has some chauvinistic aspects (restoration of Germany’s 1937 borders). The situation in today’s Europe is bound to the existence of two German states, and that must be the understanding from which one starts. Of course, one must look at history as a process that does not stand still, but every change in this regard will take a long time and involve international thinking over long periods. He could imagine a solution to this problem only within the “federal structures of a wider Europe”. For him, it is particularly important in this context to connect the process of inner renewal with everything that shows European responsibility.

In the afternoon of 24.11, the Chancellor held meetings with Mr. de Maizière<sup>9</sup> (CDU), Mr. Steffen Reiche (SPD)<sup>10</sup>, and Professor Jens Reich (Forum)<sup>11</sup> as well as with Mayor Momper<sup>12</sup>.

5 *Österreichischer Rundfunk (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation).*

6 Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

7 The Buna Werke were a chemical company specializing in the production of polymer materials.

8 The Leuna Werke were the largest chemical production site in the GDR.

9 Lothar de Maizière (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4–2.10.1990.

10 Steffen Reiche (\*1960), [dodis.ch/P57524](https://dodis.ch/P57524), co-founder of the Social Democratic Party in the GDR.

11 Jens Reich (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57525](https://dodis.ch/P57525), co-author of the appeal Aufbruch 89 – Neues Forum.

12 Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991.



[dodis.ch/52938](https://dodis.ch/52938)

Canada

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth<sup>2</sup>, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs*

GERMAN REUNIFICATION: THE STREET SPEAKS

Confidential

Bonn, 6 December 1989

Our German (West) interlocutors, such as Teltschik<sup>3</sup> in Chancellor's office, repeatedly have stressed to us that while Bonn recognizes dangers in pursuing reunification too precipitously and will remain loyal to its Western allies, it is the people in the streets of the GDR who will play a decisive role in this debate.

2. FRG electronic and print media is absorbed totally in what is happening next door. There is one dramatic event after another as the political guillotine (without a Robespierre) takes its toll. Krenz<sup>4</sup> is now gone. Honecker<sup>5</sup> is under house arrest. GDR state security apparatus is under siege and the entire SED, including Modrow<sup>6</sup>, appears discredited. Banners calling for reunification are blossoming in greater numbers. There is talk of advancing elections to May from the autumn and of a referendum on reunification.

3. But it is not only in the GDR streets that events are happening. In the FRG, Bild-Zeitung (FRG and Europe's largest circulation newspaper) yesterday ran a one word, three inch high headline in national red, gold, and black colours "Einheit (Unity)". USA Ambassador Walters<sup>7</sup> made a public prediction that there will be a reunified Germany with Berlin as its capital within five years and has sent the Bonn coffee and cake Hausfraus crowd to gossiping about the merits of selling their houses in Bonn before real estate prices in Berlin become too high.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. ZQGR0559 (incoming): Global Affairs Canada file 25-3-3-5-Germany / Confidential. Ref: Our tels AQGR0556 28 NOV and 0574 04 DEC (NOTAL). Info to Privy Council Office, Brussels-EEC, Brussels, Brussels-NATO, London, Washington, Paris, Paris-OECD, Rome, Tokyo, Geneva, Warsaw, Budapest, Helsinki, Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Hague, Bern, Vienna, Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Madrid, Athens, Ankara, Moscow, Bucharest, Belgrade and Prague.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas W. Delworth (1929–2012), [dodis.ch/P51338](https://dodis.ch/P51338), Canadian Ambassador in Bonn 1987–1992.

<sup>3</sup> Horst M. Teltschik (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57413](https://dodis.ch/P57413), Foreign policy advisor to the Chancellor of the FRG.

<sup>4</sup> Egon Krenz (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54794](https://dodis.ch/P54794), General Secretary of the SED 18.10.1989–3.12.1989 and Chairman of the GDR State Council 18.10.1989–6.12.1989.

<sup>5</sup> Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

<sup>6</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>7</sup> Vernon A. Walters (1917–2002), [dodis.ch/P54605](https://dodis.ch/P54605), US Ambassador in Bonn 1989–1991.

4. On 05 December it was announced by Modrow and Seitters<sup>8</sup> of Chancellor's office that an agreement had been reached on removing visas and currency changing requirements for West Germans visiting the East and setting up a currency conversion mechanism and fund for East Germans travelling West (details in separate telegram). This will result in massive two-way flow of Germans. A huge economic assistance plan is under discussion (our telegram ZQGR2473 06 DEC<sup>9</sup>). The CDU has announced that its next party conference in January will be split, with the first session in Bad Krasnall in Bavaria and the second in Leipzig, where it says there are many CSU supporters.

5. How far this integrative process, led primarily from below, will go is difficult to predict. It is, however, proceeding apace while statesmen talk and muse about what is and what is not possible.

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<sup>8</sup> Rudolf Seitters (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57431](https://dodis.ch/P57431), Minister without portfolio in the Government of the FRG 1989–1991.

<sup>9</sup> Not located.

[dodis.ch/52944](https://dodis.ch/52944)

Israel

*Letter<sup>1</sup> from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin<sup>2</sup>, to the Director-General of the Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav<sup>3</sup>*

SUBJECT: ISRAEL-GDR

Jerusalem, 17 December 1989

1. In the calls by the leaders of the GDR to establish diplomatic relations with Israel which we have witnessed over the last few days, we can see some difference in their content and their tone. ("Without prior conditions", "The GDR expects capital investment from Israel even before the establishment of relations", "The GDR intends to discuss payment of compensation to the victims of the Nazis", "East Germany cannot pay compensation – especially not when it is in economic difficulties – but will be ready to give humanitarian aid to Holocaust victims" etc.) (The quotations are taken from press reports and may not be accurate).

2. However, they have a marked interest in discussing the subject of establishing relations and the question of compensation with us. As well as the GDR's interest in improving its image in the West and getting help from it and from Israel to reconstruct the economy, it seems to me that the reason for the recent offensive is the assumption that the GDR of today sees Israel and world Jewry as a partner in opposing "German reunification". And relations with it may give the current regime a stamp of diplomatic approval, while it is disassociating itself from the methods of the previous regime in the GDR.

3. The wish to discuss normalization of relations with us was passed on, as you know, through me in March this year, while I was serving in Bucharest<sup>4</sup> – as an official message: [*a proposal*] to hold a diplomatic dialogue (in Bucharest) and a meeting of the two Foreign Ministers at the UN General Assembly. It may be that this was the intention of the East German Prime Minister, Modrow<sup>5</sup>, when he mentioned in an interview with a Haaretz<sup>6</sup> reporter (Today) "We have approached

1 *Letter (translated from Hebrew):* Israel State Archives MFA7352/17. Copies to Sallai Meridor, [dodis.ch/P57514](https://dodis.ch/P57514) and Moshe Melamed, [dodis.ch/P57515](https://dodis.ch/P57515).

2 Yosef Govrin (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57509](https://dodis.ch/P57509), Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989–1993.

3 Reuven Merhav (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57513](https://dodis.ch/P57513), Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989–1991.

4 As Israel's Ambassador.

5 Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

6 Israeli daily newspaper.

108 Israel directly. I hope that the answer will be positive". As far as I know there has been no other approach up till now.

4. Events in the GDR are still developing and it is too early to judge if there will be a significant change in the East Germans' attitude towards our issues. Therefore I would recommend that for the moment we confine ourselves to the expression that was already published in our name at this time, that is, "that the GDR must first recognize its responsibility for the Holocaust and the crimes of the Nazis and arrange the payment of compensation to the victims of the Nazis."

[dodis.ch/52953](https://dodis.ch/52953)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Ambassador of the FRG in Paris, Franz Pfeffer<sup>2</sup>, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG*

FRENCH POSITION ON THE GERMAN QUESTION, FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS

*Extract Confidential and very urgent*

Paris, 18 Dezember 1989, 3.54 p.m.

For information

I herewith present a report by the Embassy's Political Section on the French position on the German Question. The focus is on critical aspects of which our Head Office should be aware.

Based on my experiences in colloquia and talks, I note the following:

1. "La France profonde" ("deep France") of the provinces and simple, decent people has reacted in a very healthy way to the fall of the Wall and developments in the GDR. Joy, solidarity and willingness to help can be felt in the letters we have received. These people are also the reason for our good ratings. This part of France is impressed by the resolve and moderation that allowed the peaceful revolution to be achieved without bloodshed. Young French people feel the same way or at least a large percentage of them do.

2. The political class in France is full of doubt and scepticism. Concerns range from a resurgence of Bismarck's<sup>3</sup> Reich to German economic predominance. But only a very few people say they do not want German reunification. Most are waiting to see what will happen and playing for time. As always, Mitterrand<sup>4</sup> is able to see furthest. He is apparently convinced that there will be reunification, but would like to help guide the process in an orderly fashion, in particular to ensure that the European integration process is not adversely affected.

We should not underestimate those in the French civil service who would like to put the brakes on further developments. These people also cause difficulties for us in other areas (from talks on disarmament to the project on integrated Franco-German embassies). Only a few civil servants are as pro-European and

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 3280/3281 (incoming, translated from German): Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA B 1, Bd. 178922. Delivered by: 19 December 1989, 9.12 p.m. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Berlin-Munich, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 33. Ref.: Telegram No. 3235 – Pol 330.00 and No. 3236/37 – Pol 322.00 of 13 December 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Franz Pfeffer (\*1926), [dodis.ch/P57451](https://dodis.ch/P57451), Ambassador of the FRG in Paris 7.11.1987–31.1.1991.

<sup>3</sup> Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), [dodis.ch/P3822](https://dodis.ch/P3822), Chancellor of the German Empire 1871–1890.

<sup>4</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

convinced of the need for Germany and France to take a joint stance as Secretary General Bianco<sup>5</sup> (Elysée) and Permanent Under-Secretary Scheer<sup>6</sup> (Quai).

3. Almost immediately after the “euphoric phase” of the fall of the Wall, the media switched to criticism and concern. At times, it is downright malicious, with talk of the danger of a re-emerging Third Reich and the rebirth of anti-Semitism. The media gives the impression that the conditions for reunification must be dictated to us again (it must be peaceful, democratic, in a European context, accepted by the Four Powers and recognise the Oder-Neisse Line).

4. Our public diplomacy efforts are now of crucial importance in France. I have been able to present our position several times on television and on the radio. Colloquia are held frequently and the German problem is the topic of every conversation.

The more calmly and controlled we present our views, the sooner we can make use of the situation and the more respect we will receive (as a western extension of the moderation shown by our compatriots in the East). Depending on the forum, the important thing is to present the principles of our policies in a simple or more subtle way, namely that the shared goal with France and the other Western partners is to overcome the division of Europe and thus also the division of Germany (as part of a peaceful evolution, avoiding destabilisation, exercising the right to self-determination in the GDR, and speeding up the West European integration process in order to maintain a firm stance and to be able to help the reforming countries in the East in an effective way).

Presenting our views in this way always enables us to deflect further argument. Particularly when speaking to a young audience, such as students, I have received resounding applause for such points.

Annex (drafted by Elfenkämper<sup>7</sup>)

#### I. Summary:

Since the summer, the position taken by French officialdom on the “German Question” has become increasingly rigid as events in and around the GDR have accelerated; under certain circumstances, this position could prove to be a burden on Franco-German relations for a longer period of time, not least because French motives are wide-ranging and the country’s stabilisation endeavours can not only be seen from the perspective of a current transition crisis that is regarded as potentially dangerous.

It is currently unclear whether France will manage to bring itself to play a constructive role in an emerging trend towards a stronger German position in Europe and to make use of the privileged Franco-German relationship in this regard or if it will try to postpone such a development for as long as possible as allegedly not being in its interest. In the latter case, this could give rise to longer-term problems in official Franco-German relations. Should these problems go on for longer, they

<sup>5</sup> Jean-Louis Bianco (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57454](https://dodis.ch/P57454), Secretary General to the President of France 1982–1991.

<sup>6</sup> François Scheer (\*1934), [dodis.ch/P56758](https://dodis.ch/P56758), Secretary-General of the French Foreign Ministry 1988–1992.

<sup>7</sup> Helmut Elfenkämper (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57453](https://dodis.ch/P57453), Councillor at the Embassy of the FRG in Paris 1987–1991.

111 could also rub off on the deeper layers of Franco-German relations that have so far not been affected. This type of development must be avoided.

In the Embassy's opinion, we should do everything we can in the short term to create as much common ground as possible between France and Germany. The French President will visit the GDR immediately after the Federal Chancellor's visit <sup>8</sup>. These visits could serve as a test case for a dovetailed, coordinated division of labour between France and Germany.

At the same time, we should work on the French media, but remain aware of the limits of our ability to shape French opinion towards us in France. We should also explore to what extent the various levels of the comprehensive and special Franco-German consultation mechanism can be used more intensively, e.g. for joint discussions on the question of how far the current developments in Europe will affect security policy.

[...] <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998. He visited Dresden on 19 and 20 December 1989 and François Mitterrand visited East Berlin and Leipzig from 20 to 22 December 1989.

<sup>9</sup> For the complete version of the document in German cf. [dodis.ch/52953](https://dodis.ch/52953).

[dodis.ch/52950](https://dodis.ch/52950)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Memo<sup>1</sup> for the State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry of the FRG, Jürgen Sudhoff<sup>2</sup>*

ITALIAN STANCE ON THE GERMAN QUESTION FOLLOWING PM ANDREOTTI'S<sup>3</sup> CRITICAL  
REMARKS ON GERMANY

Bonn, 18 December 1989

*Purpose of the memo:* for information

1. In contrast to the Italian media, the Italian Government has reacted with marked coolness and reserve to the events of recent weeks in Germany.

The only official statement has come from the Farnesina, which expressed the hope on 10 November 1989 that "the German people can be the main player in all future decisions". The topic was discussed in the Italian cabinet for the first time on the evening before the European Council in Strasbourg after Deputy PM Martelli<sup>4</sup> had publicly criticised the lack of an official Italian position during his visit to Bonn.

2. PM Andreotti's repeated comments on the German Question in newspaper interviews have thus attracted a great deal of attention. He has primarily expressed concern about a threat to the delicate balance of power in Europe and the political future of Soviet President and party leader Gorbachev<sup>5</sup>, whose fate he sees as tied to a balanced and gradual solution to the German Question in a pan-European framework. His divergence from the generally more positive assessment by the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI), but also by Democrazia Cristiana (DC) itself, has thus become clear.

Following the sudden opening of the Wall on 9 November 1989, PM Andreotti did not comment on issues concerning the future of the two German states, but instead urged people to "keep their nerve". Regardless of the dramatic changes in

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (translated from German):* Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA B 24, Bd. 173561, file reference 203-322.00 ITA allg. Written by Karl-Heinz Kuhna, [dodis.ch/P57382](https://dodis.ch/P57382) and Beate Grzeski, [dodis.ch/P57418](https://dodis.ch/P57418) and signed by Karl-Heinz Kuhna. Seen by Rolf Hofstetter, [dodis.ch/P57420](https://dodis.ch/P57420), and Dieter Kastrup, [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383), on 18 December 1989 and by Jürgen Sudhoff on 19 December 1989. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Jürgen Sudhoff (\*1935), [dodis.ch/P57384](https://dodis.ch/P57384), State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry of the FRG 22.4.1987–17.1.1991.

<sup>3</sup> Giulio Andreotti (1919–2013), [dodis.ch/P13865](https://dodis.ch/P13865), Prime Minister of Italy 22.7.1989–28.6.1992.

<sup>4</sup> Claudio Martelli (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57421](https://dodis.ch/P57421), Deputy Prime Minister of Italy 23.7.1989–28.6.1992.

<sup>5</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.



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the GDR, he reiterated his view in several subsequent interviews that the question of reunification was “not current”. In fact, he regards the concept of “one nation – two states” as becoming current “in the foreseeable future”. (Most recently in an interview with “Corriere della Sera” on 26 November 1989).

Fundamentally, PM Andreotti is one of the politicians who called at an early stage for the reform processes in Central and Eastern Europe to be regarded as a positive development that should be encouraged. His clear reservations regarding the German Question is thus all the more striking. However, it is not surprising if one recalls his comments in 1984, when he said “there are two German states and there should be two in the future” and warned about “pan-Germanism”. He has never retracted these comments.

Following the meeting of the European Council in Strasbourg<sup>6</sup>, PM Andreotti (“La Stampa” of 12 December 1989) spoke of the Germans’ “right – hope would be a better word” to reunification. Here, too, his inclination was to play down the German Question. Commenting on the terms “self-determination” and “German people” in the European Council Conclusions of Strasbourg, he said that he had argued for the use of the term “free expression of the people’s will”, explaining that the Germans had “not clarified” at the start of the discussion “whether they were also referring to the millions of Germans living in Russia, Poland etc.”. Although this interpretation may have served to back up his previous comments, it is not particularly well-disposed towards the Federal Republic of Germany in the light of our bilateral relations, which are otherwise characterised by trust.

In the pan-European context, Andreotti expressed his concern that the term “self-determination” could boost separatist tendencies, especially in Yugoslavia. Concern that the South Tyrol conflict could flare up may be behind these comments.

3. In contrast to PM Andreotti, other Italian politicians – including some from DC, but primarily from the Socialist Party – have commented more positively on the German Question. During his state visit to Algeria on 12 November 1989, President Cossiga<sup>7</sup>, who is himself a member of DC, expressed understanding for the “Germans’ legitimate desire for reunification”. Foreign Minister De Michelis<sup>8</sup>, Deputy PM Martelli and party head Craxi<sup>9</sup> of the PSI, and even Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) head Occhetto<sup>10</sup> have expressed fundamental support for respecting the right to self-determination. On 5 December 1989, Martelli accused PM Andreotti of having his head in the sand if he regarded the German Question as not current. Foreign Minister de Michelis has expressed similar views.

4. Despite PM Andreotti’s reservations, however, the basic consensus in Italian politics regarding Central and Eastern Europe should not be forgotten.

Italy is pursuing a policy of realism and pragmatism that sees stability in Europe as the main goal. That is why it believes the German Question can only be re-

6 For the conclusions of the European Council on 8 and 9 December 1989 cf. [www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20580/1989\\_december\\_-\\_strasbourg\\_eng\\_.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/20580/1989_december_-_strasbourg_eng_.pdf).

7 Francesco Cossiga (1928–2010), [dodis.ch/P55266](http://dodis.ch/P55266), President of Italy 9.7.1985–27.5.1992.

8 Gianni De Michelis (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57415](http://dodis.ch/P57415), Italian Foreign Minister 22.07.1989–28.06.1992.

9 Bettino Craxi (1934–2000), [dodis.ch/P57423](http://dodis.ch/P57423), Secretary-General of the Italian Socialist Party 1976–1993.

10 Achille Occhetto (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57424](http://dodis.ch/P57424), Secretary-General of the Italian Communist Party 1988–1991.

solved as part of a general process of bringing West and East back together. In an interview with “La Stampa” on 12 November 1989, Foreign Minister de Michelis expressed support for speeding up “vertical integration” in the EC, while continuing “horizontal integration” in Eastern European countries. He said that flexible mechanisms must be developed in order to integrate these countries step by step through association.

Upholding the Helsinki Final Act is as important to Italy as the EC aspect. The borders are fundamentally inviolable, although in an interview on 12 November 1989 de Michelis referred to the possibility of reviewing the border agreement through East-West consensus within the framework of the CSCE process. However, the Italian Government and public are concerned that the turbulent developments in the GDR and other Eastern bloc countries could cause instability in the Soviet Union and undermine Gorbachev’s position. By reacting cautiously, the West hopes to help counteract the fear in the Soviet Union that the West alone will benefit from the spectacular transformation in Central and Eastern Europe.

5. We can assume that the European Council in Strasbourg succeeded in allaying the Italian Government’s concerns in this regard. As far as Italy is concerned, the agreement that the Intergovernmental Conference will start during Italy’s Presidency in the second half of 1990 and the wording on the German Question in the conclusions mean that the German Government will be involved in the EC integration process. Even PM Andreotti declared in a statement to the press after the cabinet meeting on 15 December 1989 that he completely identifies with the European Council conclusions, which he said he had played an active role in drafting.

However, it must be noted that despite the fundamental consensus between Italy and the Federal Republic of Germany on security, West-East relations and European integration, we still have plenty of work ahead of us as regards persuading the Italians on the German Question. German unification is naturally not a key Italian interest and tends to be met with underlying reserve by some sections of the Italian public. PM Andreotti’s sceptical stance is symptomatic of this. Rome in particular is keeping a close eye on possible German leadership in the West-East process, not least because Italy has high economic hopes of its own as regards development in Eastern Europe.

Italy’s concerns about Germany should be countered by extensive information and prompt and close coordination at bilateral and European level, as was the case at the European Council in Strasbourg. Ambassador Ruth<sup>11</sup> plans to hold talks with PM Andreotti on further developments in Germany and Europe as soon as possible. It would also be useful to continue the dialogue with Italy on further developments in Central and Eastern Europe at a high political level via an official visit by Foreign Minister Genscher<sup>12</sup> to Rome in the spring. We should also press for the next German-Italian intergovernmental consultations to be held as soon as possible in Rome. The talks could take place in the early summer of 1990 in order to discuss this topic at the head of government level.

<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Ruth (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P57425](https://dodis.ch/P57425), Ambassador of the FRG in Rome 18.11.1986–29.2.1992.

<sup>12</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

[dodis.ch/52925](https://dodis.ch/52925)

United Kingdom

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby<sup>2</sup>, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd<sup>3</sup>*

THE GERMAN QUESTION: OUR PUBLIC LINE

Confidential

Bonn, 5 January 1990, 4.41 p.m.

*Summary*

1. Despite our supportive line on the German wish to achieve unity through self-determination, the UK is perceived here as perhaps the least positive of the three Western Allies, and the least important. Need to present our policy in the most positive light we can. Your visit to East Berlin and the GDR an opportunity.

*Detail*

2. I remain concerned that despite our consistent support for the principle of German unity through self-determination, the UK is perceived here as opposing, or at least wishing to brake, reunification. The French, on the other hand, whose doubts seem if anything stronger than ours, manage to maintain a more positive public image (Mitterrand's<sup>4</sup> remarks in Kiev notwithstanding<sup>5</sup>). The US are perceived as the most supportive of German aspirations even while laying down conditions for German unity.

3. Two recent British statements have stuck in German minds and coloured their perception of our policy. The first was your comment in Berlin on 16 November that German unity was not on the agenda<sup>6</sup>. This was true at the time. But Kohl's<sup>7</sup> ten point statement on 28 November put it on the agenda, even if without a timetable. The second was the Prime Minister's<sup>8</sup> statement in Brussels on 1 De-

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 12 (incoming): UK National Archives FCO 33/10716. Repeated for information: Priority to the British Embassy in East Berlin; Routine British Military Government Berlin, the British Embassies in Washington, Moscow and Paris and the UK Delegation to NATO.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Christopher Mallaby (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57461](https://dodis.ch/P57461), British Ambassador in Bonn, 1988–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

<sup>4</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

<sup>5</sup> President Mitterrand had met President Gorbachev in Kiev on 6 December 1989. At a joint news conference he had stated: None of our countries, and especially one whose weight is so great and whose geographical position is such, can act without taking into account the balance of Europe.

<sup>6</sup> In fact Douglas Hurd had used this formula on at least three previous occasions: in a press conference in The Hague on 9 November 1989, a BBC World Service interview on 10 November 1989 and a BBC Radio interview in Bonn on 15 November 1989.

<sup>7</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>8</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.

cember that reunification should not take place for ten to fifteen years<sup>9</sup>. The latter continues to be quoted by German commentators as evidence of a negative and mistrustful British attitude.

4. As against the background of Bush's<sup>10</sup> policy of a "Europe whole and free", Baker's<sup>11</sup> four conditions for German reunification have been well-received here, because of the spirit that is thought to lie behind them and because they are seen as designed to facilitate, rather than prevent, German unity. The same cannot be said of Mitterrand's contributions. In Bonn on 3 November he said he had no fear of German reunification, which posed no problems for France. Three days later in Kiev he said reunification "is not a question for now" and that the question of frontiers should not be raised again. The fact is that as the FRG's best friend and most important European partner, France can get away with a great deal. It is characteristic that Kohl should have visited Mitterrand in south-west France on 4 January to mend fences<sup>12</sup>. The UK by contrast is at present seen as neither especially important nor as well disposed. Both aspects can reduce our influence on the FRG at this critical time.

5. Your visit to East Berlin and the GDR which is likely to be widely reported here, provides an important opportunity to try to put a more positive spin on our presentation<sup>13</sup>. You could use the Strasbourg/NATO formulae (East Berlin telos 003 and 007<sup>14</sup>) but present them as a statement of British policy. You could also draw on other elements in the public line recently produced by the Department in consultation with this Embassy<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> *In fact at the NATO Heads of Government meeting on 4 December 1989.*

<sup>10</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>11</sup> James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

<sup>12</sup> Helmut Kohl had visited François Mitterrand's private residence at Latche in Gascony.

<sup>13</sup> Douglas Hurd's visit was to take place on 22–24 January 1990.

<sup>14</sup> *The European Council's Strasbourg declaration read: We seek the strengthening of the state of peace in Europe in which the German people will regain its unity through free self-determination. This process should take place peacefully and democratically, in full respect of the relevant agreements and treaties and of all the principles defined by the Helsinki Final Act, in a context of dialogue and East-West cooperation. It also has to be placed in the context of European integration. The Strasbourg formula was repeated in the communiqué issued at the end of the North Atlantic Council.*

<sup>15</sup> Charles Powell (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57468](https://dodis.ch/P57468), Private Secretary to the British Prime Minister, commented in a letter to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office dated 9 January 1990: The Prime Minister has seen Bonn telegram number 12 commenting on our public line on the German question. She thought it showed a lack of understanding of our policy which she finds alarming. She would like to see any reply before it is sent. UK National Archives FCO 33/10893.

[dodis.ch/52913](https://dodis.ch/52913)

United States

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> by the United States National Security Council*

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH CHANCELLOR HELMUT KOHL<sup>2</sup> OF THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Sensitive

Washington, D.C., 26 January 1990

*The President<sup>3</sup>*: Hello, Helmut.

*Chancellor Kohl*: All the best. I hear all is going well. I am pleased the Panama matter<sup>4</sup> went so well. The scoundrel<sup>5</sup> is where he belongs.

*The President*: I appreciate your views very much. If you have a moment, I want to talk to you today about the way the political situation is developing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and how these events relate to our position in the talks on conventional arms in Vienna.

*Chancellor Kohl*: I would be very pleased. Take all the time you need.

*The President*: Our proposal on the table is for both the United States and the Soviet Union to have no more than 275,000 troops stationed in Europe when the CFE reductions are complete, in the mid-1990s. The Soviets have been putting out hints the figure is completely unrealistic, and I believe, given recent events, they are correct.

The Czech and Hungarian governments are negotiating now for Soviet troop pullouts by the end of this year or next.

*Chancellor Kohl*: I do believe they will pull out.

*The President*: Meanwhile, President Havel<sup>6</sup> has indicated that he plans to ask in February for greater U.S. and Soviet troop cuts than those now in our CFE proposal.

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum (copy)*. Bush Presidential Library 91111-005. Participants: George H. W. Bush, Helmut Kohl, Philip Zelikow, [dodis.ch/P57411](https://dodis.ch/P57411) and Erika Konuk, [dodis.ch/P57412](https://dodis.ch/P57412). The conversation took place in the Oval Office on 26 January 1990, 1989, 1.19–1.55PM.

<sup>2</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>3</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> The United States invasion of Panama occurred between 20 December 1989 and 31 January 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Manuel Noriega (1934–2017), [dodis.ch/P54758](https://dodis.ch/P54758), de facto ruler of Panama 1983–1989.

<sup>6</sup> Václav Havel (1936–2011), [dodis.ch/P52679](https://dodis.ch/P52679), President of the CSSR 29.12.1989–20.7.1992.

We have heard from various people, including the Soviet negotiator in Vienna<sup>7</sup>, that Moscow is moving toward our position on capping U.S. and Soviet stationed forces, but we understand they'll come at us with a number well below 275,000.

*Chancellor Kohl:* That is quite possible too.

*The President:* We need to be out in front. It would otherwise seem to the East Europeans as if we were trying to keep Soviet troops where they are not wanted. In my view, nothing we do should in any way complicate or delay achieving CFE in 1990 and we should redouble our efforts to accomplish this.

*Chancellor Kohl:* I completely agree. It is of the utmost importance. I'll wait until you finish; then I'll make a proposal.

*The President:* We believe, after talking to our military experts about this, that a force of 195,000 U.S. troops in the Central zone in Europe in the mid-1990s is a significant and sustainable level to maintain forward defense and implement the NATO strategy of flexible response. 195 U.S. in the Central Zone (interpreter repeated only "195 U.S."). I am persuaded that the best way to make these manpower reductions and to sustain the new force levels is within an arms control negotiating process, keeping the U.S. in Central Europe and NATO strong.

*Chancellor Kohl:* I believe that is something. Do you plan to introduce this into the negotiations now?

*The President:* I want to send Larry Eagleburger<sup>8</sup> and Bob Gates<sup>9</sup> over to talk to you quietly, and to Rome, London, and Paris, to be sure how key allies feel on this.

*Chancellor Kohl:* It is a very good idea, and we should soon set a date for these two gentlemen.

*The President:* I propose early next week, or in a few days. We should get out front with our objective so it will not seem as if we're being dragged there by the Soviets or East Europeans.

*Chancellor Kohl:* That is exactly the point.

*The President:* We have pressure from our Congress, as you do with your Bundestag. We should get out front so they won't take the heart out of our defense programs.

What do you think about this? How do you think the key allies will react?

*Chancellor Kohl:* First, it is absolutely correct and right to take the initiative, and state this openly. The most important improvement in this Administration, compared to previous ones, is that you are always taking the offensive – for the Fed-

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<sup>7</sup> Oleg Grinevsky (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57632](https://dodis.ch/P57632), Chief Soviet Arms Control Negotiator for the CFE Treaty in Vienna.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence S. Eagleburger (1930–2011), [dodis.ch/P57397](https://dodis.ch/P57397), United States Deputy Secretary of State 20.3.1989–8.12.1992.

<sup>9</sup> Robert M. Gates (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57404](https://dodis.ch/P57404), United States Deputy National Security Advisor 20.3.1989–6.11.1991.



119 eral Republic, the US, and Europe in general. This is also my view with Eastern Europe, and I'll have more on that later.

So, first, the principle of the idea is very good and useful. We'll have to discuss the details. In Europe: Margaret<sup>10</sup> will be difficult for various reasons not necessarily involved with this issue. I believe Mitterrand,<sup>11</sup> if he is consulted sufficiently to defer to his psychological judgment, will probably follow my position. Let me phrase it differently: You know my old assessment – salute the flag of the FRG once, but the tricolor three times. That is very important, because there are French domestic policy issues. But I have a very friendly feeling about that. If you address Mitterrand directly, it will be OK.

Italy and Spain will most likely take the same position as we do, as will the Benelux and other countries. The most important thing is that Europeans see George Bush as taking the initiative, not just getting it from the Soviets.

When your people are over here next week, in my view next Thursday would be most convenient, I'll talk to them for 3 or 4 hours and we can easily establish a German-US position.

*The President:* Is there any way you could see them on Monday or Tuesday? I have a State of the Union message next week on January 31. If we could do it before then, we'd like to announce this idea on January 31. This will be an enormous nationally and internationally noted speech.

I have one alternative proposal: If in principle this sounds agreeable, I could send it to you in writing and we could agree to work on the details after January 31, or have our people talk to your experts.

*Chancellor Kohl:* I am interested in talking to your people. I could accommodate them on Tuesday, at 1500 our time.

*The President:* They'll be there.

*Chancellor Kohl:* That will be 0900 in the morning your time. Our talks will be complete by noon your time, and that should be sufficient for you. So, Teltschik<sup>12</sup> will call on Monday to arrange the details. Then we could also talk on the phone on Tuesday evening, if that should be useful. I also agree that it is very important to announce this idea during your State of the Union address.

*The President:* Thank you my friend. Eagleburger and Gates will call on your office at 1500 Bonn time on Tuesday, January 30. Following that, if necessary, we'll talk on the telephone.

*Chancellor Kohl:* OK. So, I would like to add a short remark on developments in Europe.

*The President:* Yes, I am very interested.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.

<sup>11</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

<sup>12</sup> Horst M. Teltschik (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57413](https://dodis.ch/P57413), Head of Division in the Foreign Ministry of the FRG.

*Chancellor Kohl:* I hear the problems are increasing in Moscow, but there is no alternative with the personnel – I mean the number one<sup>13</sup>. But I think the situation is one where we should think on how we can help them, perhaps simply with food, food for some major cities. Apparently he has tremendous difficulties in moving supplies of food. This would not be as a gift, but with as few conditions for them as possible. I will call you again when I've progressed further in my considerations. Perhaps I will talk about this with Eagleburger.

*The President:* That would be very timely.

*Chancellor Kohl:* On Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, they are developing. It needs much time; the problems there are serious. But I believe they can handle them.

The situation is dramatic in the GDR. The reason is, *that* administration is having a very hard time in pushing things forward in a sensible manner. The reason is not that they don't want to do it. They just *cannot* do it right. There is a considerable difference with Czechoslovakia. Havel has strong moral authority; Mazowiecki<sup>14</sup> too, and the government in Hungary has much less authority, but some authority plus the support of the opposition. The Modrow<sup>15</sup> administration has hardly any authority at all.

I myself am pushing necessary reforms forward piece by piece. There is some success in the economic field, but things that should take one day take weeks. The result: confidence of the population in the administration is catastrophic. People are leaving in the thousands, and the rest are sitting on packed suitcases. Since January 1,043,000 have come over. In the long term this is unsustainable. Those are the good people – doctors, engineers, specialists. They cannot be replaced.

I will be meeting with Modrow a week from Sunday in Switzerland for an hour, and he will be here on February 13, and I'll do all I can to stabilize matters. Destabilization would have tremendous consequences for everyone else. I try to see this from an overall perspective, in connection with all the things to be considered like NATO, the EC, and disarmament questions. My job is now to stop destabilization in Central Europe. That is the matter I work on day and night now.

George, it's my great wish that soon we might have a few hours to talk, just the two of us, with only a few people present. I'd like you to think about whether I could come over for a few hours. In November we talked about a possible visit to Camp David. Could we realize that in the next few weeks?

*The President:* I am very enthusiastic about that. Come and spend the night, perhaps on a weekend. I will talk to Eagleburger and give you some dates. It is very important that we sit down in just that setting.

<sup>13</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>14</sup> Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927–2013), [dodis.ch/P57378](https://dodis.ch/P57378), Prime Minister of Poland 24.8.1989–12.1.1991.

<sup>15</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.



121 *Chancellor Kohl*: I have some concrete ideas. I would have called you. I'm considering coming on a Saturday, returning on Sunday, in the evening.

*The President*: Perfect. I'll be flexible on that.

Also, let's keep this other idea in our confidence. If it leaks, the Soviets could get out in front.

*Chancellor Kohl*: That was understood. Rest assured.

*The President*: It worked last time. Baker is here; he sends his best.

*Chancellor Kohl*: My best to him too. Looking at my calendar, the best days would be February 24 and 25.

*The President*: Those look good for me.

*Chancellor Kohl*: Good. We'll confirm in the next few days. Please accept my best wishes. Hannelore<sup>16</sup> says goodbye.

(The President briefly conversed with Hannelore Kohl and assured her that she was welcome to come to Camp David and, if she came, Barbara<sup>17</sup> would also be there.)

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<sup>16</sup> Hannelore Kohl (1933–2001), [dodis.ch/P57407](https://dodis.ch/P57407), Wife of Helmut Kohl.

<sup>17</sup> Barbara Bush (1925–2018), [dodis.ch/P57406](https://dodis.ch/P57406), United States First Lady 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

[dodis.ch/52931](https://dodis.ch/52931)

Austria

*Memorandum of conversation<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Foreign Ministry*

GDR; VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER MODROW<sup>2</sup> IN AUSTRIA; CONVERSATION FM<sup>3</sup> – FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER, 26.1.1990

Vienna, 30 January 1990

During the work meeting of the Federal Minister with GDR FM Fischer<sup>4</sup> on 26 January 1990 the following issues were broached:

*1. Bilateral Issues*

*1.1. Repealing Visa Requirements:* The foreign ministers agreed to tentatively repeal the visa requirements from 1 February 1990, 0:00 until 28 February 1990, 24:00. By then, negotiations on a corresponding agreement should be completed, which should come into force on 1 March 1990.

*1.2. Repealing Car Tax Liability:* Foreign Minister Fischer handed over a note in which the request was put forward again. The note will be transferred to Department III.7 under a separate reference number.

*2. International Questions*

*2.1. Unification of the German States:* Foreign Minister Fischer emphasized that it would come to unification; it must be embedded in the overcoming of European division.

*2.2. CSCE process:* According to Foreign Minister Fischer the negotiations in Vienna are going too slowly (the usual conference mechanism is running rampant). He therefore welcomes the initiative of Genscher<sup>5</sup>, Dumas<sup>6</sup> and de Michelis<sup>7</sup>. Given the time and effort required for a summit of 35, and the pressing international issues, to the GDR it seems worth considering following directly up in Vienna with

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum of conversation (translated from German):* Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1990, GZ. 43.18.01/11-II.3/90. Written by Hans Peter Manz, [dodis.ch/P57510](https://dodis.ch/P57510) and signed by Ernst Sucharipa [dodis.ch/P57511](https://dodis.ch/P57511); also published in Wilson Center, doc. [165719](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/document/165719). Sent to the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister, the General Secretariat, the section heads II, III, IV, the Departments II.1, II.7, III.7, IV.2, the Austrian Embassies in East Berlin and Bonn and the Austrian Delegation in West Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>3</sup> Alois Mock (1934–2017), [dodis.ch/P57512](https://dodis.ch/P57512), Austrian Foreign Minister 21.1.1987–4.5.1995.

<sup>4</sup> Oskar Fischer (\*1923), [dodis.ch/P51055](https://dodis.ch/P51055), Foreign Minister of the GDR 3.3.1975–12.4.1990.

<sup>5</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>6</sup> Roland Dumas (\*1922), [dodis.ch/P15651](https://dodis.ch/P15651), French Foreign Minister 10.5.1988–28.3.1993.

<sup>7</sup> Gianni De Michelis (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57415](https://dodis.ch/P57415), Italian Foreign Minister 22.07.1989–28.06.1992.

123 “Helsinki II”. The holding of two separate summits in the current year (Signing of the agreements/European discussion) would, anyway, not be advantageous. The Federal Minister emphasized Austria’s interest but referred to the still upcoming interim conference before Helsinki 1991.

2.3. Foreign Minister Fischer spoke positively of Mitterrand’s<sup>8</sup> idea of a European confederation.

2.4. The Federal Minister pointed out that Austria’s policy of neutrality is still a part of the credibility of Austrian foreign policy, even if in the light of the international development it no longer has the same weight it once had.

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8 François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

[dodis.ch/52951](https://dodis.ch/52951)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Memo<sup>1</sup> for the Foreign Minister of the FRG, Hans-Dietrich Genscher<sup>2</sup>*

SOVIET POSITION ON THE GERMAN QUESTION. LATEST COMMENTS  
BY GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE

Bonn, 31 January 1990

*Purpose of the memo:* for information

# I.

With his manifest and unreserved support for German unification, Gorbachev<sup>3</sup> has put himself – as so often in the past – in the vanguard of a development that has been recognised as unstoppable. He is acting from the conviction that he will only be able to influence further developments between East and West Germany if Moscow no longer seeks to slow down the course of events. However, Gorbachev's support is surprisingly clear. While not unexpected, it is more the logical conclusion of his view that the German Question remains open and is thus the culmination so far of a development apparent in his comments since November 1989, as well as in Shevardnadze's<sup>4</sup> speech in Brussels on 19 December 1989<sup>5</sup> and article in "Izvestia" on 18 January 1990.

# II.

Gorbachev is acting now because – like Shevardnadze in his article in "Izvestia" – he wants to largely steer and tangibly influence the discussion on and organi-

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (copy, translated from German):* Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA B 38, Bd. 14707, file reference 213-321.00 SOW. Written by Klaus Neubert, [dodis.ch/P57432](https://dodis.ch/P57432), Dietmar Stüdemann, [dodis.ch/P57433](https://dodis.ch/P57433) and Helmut Wolfgang Brett, [dodis.ch/P57434](https://dodis.ch/P57434) and signed by Klaus Neubert. Forwarded to Hans-Dietrich Genscher via Wilhelm Höynck, [dodis.ch/P57435](https://dodis.ch/P57435), Dieter Kastrup, [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383) and Jürgen Sudhoff, [dodis.ch/P57384](https://dodis.ch/P57384). Handwritten note by Frank Lambach, [dodis.ch/P57395](https://dodis.ch/P57395), to Ulrich Brandenburg, [dodis.ch/P57436](https://dodis.ch/P57436), from 31 January 1990: In my opinion, the "castling queenside" involves constantly adapting to a development that is getting out of control [for] Moscow. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>4</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

<sup>5</sup> In this speech before the Political Committee of the European Parliament Eduard Shevardnadze explained the Soviet position on European integration and on a possible German unification.

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sation of a CSCE Summit. He is making use of the short period before Ottawa<sup>6</sup> to lend impetus to the discussion in the West. At the same time, he is addressing the Soviet public with the aim of gaining support for a historically inevitable and increasingly urgently needed solution to the German Question. This latter aspect is very important for Soviet domestic policy as regards underpinning foreign policy. The clear show of support for Modrow<sup>7</sup> and the fact that the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) has now recognised German unification as necessary make Gorbachev's comments helpful for this affiliated party's election campaign. His critical subtext denouncing destabilisation attempts should be understood in this context. In protecting Modrow, he is simultaneously avoiding any connection with the future fate of the PDS. Gorbachev is explicitly addressing Germans in both East and West, thus reflecting Shevardnadze's positive conclusion in the "Izvestia" article and trusting the Federal Government to live up to its historic responsibility for peace and stability in Europe. Moscow is already developing positions for its dialogue with both German states after 18 March.<sup>8</sup>

### III.

1. In view of German unification, which Moscow regards as inevitable, this process must be guided. That is why Moscow cannot afford to abandon the classic instruments (Four Power responsibility; enemy state clause<sup>9</sup>) now. In the future, we should continue to expect Soviet warnings against unilateral and destabilising measures aimed at the GDR and in relation to our European neighbours (no automatic incorporation of the GDR, no interference in internal affairs and a clear stance on the border issue).

In view of these signals from Moscow, we should take the following into account:

- The Four Power rights are important for the position of the three protecting powers *in Berlin* even if developments between East and West Germany are likely to improve the city's situation independently of these rights. However, their original purpose of safeguarding *peace* in and around Germany has now been *superseded by other instruments*.

- Shevardnadze's reference to the enemy state clause as a *peacekeeping instrument* is equally obsolete. As regards *peacekeeping*, the Four Power rights and the enemy state clause only make sense if there is a *threat of war*. As neither German state poses such a threat, these two instruments are not applicable.

- Shevardnadze's linking of the Four Power rights, the Charter of the United Nations and the CSCE process is something *we* can turn around and use for our-

<sup>6</sup> The Open Skies conference convened on 12 February 1990 in Ottawa, Canada. It was the first large scale international conference after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

<sup>7</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](http://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>8</sup> On 18 March 1990 the first free and democratic election to the People's Chamber of the GDR took place.

<sup>9</sup> The term enemy state clause refers to Article 53, Article 107 and a half-sentence in Article 77 of the Charter of the United Nations of 26 June 1945 by which the signatory States can take enforcement action directed against renewal of aggressive policy on the part of an enemy state (including military intervention) without special authorisation of the UN Security Council. Enemy states are defined as any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter (that is, primarily Germany and Japan).

selves in the following way. If the Four Power rights and the UN are not current issues because there is *no threat to peace*, then they are at best a type of insurance policy for purely hypothetical cases, thus leaving the CSCE as the only truly relevant instrument for *shaping policy* rather than preventing war.

2. The Soviets will therefore attempt to steer further developments in German politics at the CSCE Summit. This is the only framework that enables Moscow to make use of developments in Germany for its primary interest in pan-European unification.

We, too, should determine the course of the CSCE Summit in light of German policy aspects. In giving us the right to self-determination and the possibility of peaceful change, the HFA<sup>10</sup> provides us with enough prerequisites for German unification. It would be in our interest to state in a Summit document that Germany's development must be embedded in Europe's. This would simultaneously commit all Europeans to German unification. However, we should not tie this to a strict schedule so that the strong momentum in German development can continue speeding up European integration to the same extent as before (locomotive function).

In order to create a politically meaningful connection that is also *flexible* as regards the concrete development of relations between East and West Germany (synchronisation), it seems sensible to expand the CSCE process, including a certain amount of institutionalisation.

#### IV.

1. The German Question is one of Moscow's most important instruments for *influencing* European development in view of the changes in the Warsaw Pact partner countries, the unstoppable withdrawal of Soviet troops from Central Europe and recognition of the dramatic economic emergency in the Soviet Union. With regard to the CSCE Summit, Moscow will thus try to make greater use of *us* as an *engine* for *pan-European security structures*.

– Moves towards closer relations between East and West Germany and German unification will be fostered by progress in West-East relations/arms control and economic and political cooperation. Germany's interest in the first of these points is thus useful with a view to the Soviet interests in the latter.

In this regard, German interests are a possible "catalyst" for developments that could be of benefit to the Soviet Union. We should develop this element in our own interests and highlight it. This would also be a logical continuation of previous constellations in which both German states played a part in arms-control achievements via their alliances. We still have this constellation. It will remain as a positive factor for West and East *in* the process *and after* unification of the two German states.

– At the same time, the Soviet Union will endeavour to find common interests with other European countries that could form a counterbalance to developments between East and West Germany. (It is likely to continue trying to avoid unilateral dependencies when it comes to safeguarding its interests). In this way, Moscow

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10 Helsinki Final Act of 1 August 1975.

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can use the German Question as a lever with our western partners in order to achieve a "soft landing" in terms of time in the changed relations between East and West Germany.

2. As regards protecting our own interests, this means putting German unification at the heart of plans for the future Europe. As the "heart of European security" (Shevardnadze's article in "Izvestia" on 18 January), Germany fosters the transformation of the alliances in a cooperative security structure. Our aim of political integration between all Europeans is thus coming closer to being achieved. We should therefore encourage Moscow in its firm belief that only a united Germany will be a key factor for stability and the pacemaker for Central and Eastern Europe's economic and social development.

Gorbachev's "big move" shows that in light of developments in the GDR (and other Warsaw Pact countries), he has decided between Shevardnadze's two views of changes between East and West Germany, that is, a "catalyst" or a "destructive factor". Only a course that uses the momentum of German developments for peace and stability in Europe, rather than opposing them, will foster the Soviet Union's security interests and role in shaping events. At the same time, this move creates new "coordinates" for our policies. We will need to integrate the effects of Gorbachev's decision on the direction to take carefully in our policies on Germany and the *West*.

[dodis.ch/53172](https://dodis.ch/53172)

Poland

*Circular telegram<sup>1</sup> by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski<sup>2</sup>*

Urgent

Warsaw, 1 February 1990

With regard to the ongoing discussion about German reunification, please find below the position to be presented during talks:

The Polish government set out its position on the unity of the German nation under international law or as a state in the foreign minister's statement to the Sejm of 7 December 1989. The Polish government made it clear that it respects the right of the Germans to self-determination. However, this right can be realized in the framework of European order and stabilization. This order includes the existing borders between the two German states and their neighbours. Both German states can only unite – in one form or another – provided that Poland's western border along the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers is maintained. The rapprochement and ultimately fusion of the two German states should proceed gradually even as our continent's unity is restored and a new security system is built in Europe. This is a complex and multi-stage process. The unity of the German nation cannot be restored with a one-off declaration or act. Changes across German territory must go hand-in-hand with changes in Europe that support building structures that would encompass the whole of Europe. This does not rule out regional institutions made up of certain countries, however. A reunited German state will have its place in a thoroughly reformed and united Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 775 (copy, translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, ZD 33/92. Delivered to the Cryptography Section: 1 February 1990, 2.30 p.m. Addressed to the heads of post in Moscow, Berlin A., Prague, Budapest, Sofia, Bucharest, Belgrade, II Paris, I London, I Rome, I Berlin – I Mission, Cologne, I The Hague, II Madrid, I Lisbon, I Vienna, I Bern, II Athens, II Stockholm, I Copenhagen, II Helsinki, I Oslo, I Washington, IV Ottawa, IV Mexico City, IV Buenos Aires, Brasilia, New Delhi, Beijing, Tokyo, Canberra, New York – Mission, IV Geneva – Mission II.

<sup>2</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.



[dodis.ch/52960](https://dodis.ch/52960)

Netherlands

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas<sup>2</sup>, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek<sup>3</sup>*

VISIT MINISTER TER BEEK<sup>4</sup> TO DEFENSE MINISTER FRG<sup>5</sup>

Confidential

Bonn, 8 February 1990

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of this month, the Minister of Defense Ter Beek paid a visit of about three hours to his FRG colleague Stoltenberg that began with a full military ceremony. In the first hour discussions were held between both ministers accompanied only by state secretary Pfahls,<sup>6</sup> Stoltenberg's aide and myself, followed by a delegation meeting lasting over one and a half hours, to be reported on separately.

#### Situation in the GDR

Stoltenberg began the initial small group conversation by expressing the desire that, in addition to bilateral issues, security-political topics would also be discussed. He introduced these with remarks about the dramatic situation in the GDR, which, as Modrow<sup>7</sup> had said to Kohl<sup>8</sup> in Davos, was now really on the verge of administrative, economic and social collapse which is also existentially threatening for all neighbors of the GDR. For this reason the federal government is forced to first deal with the economic and internal problems of German unification and shift the recognized external, status- and safety aspects to a future date for the time being.

This, according to Stoltenberg, had just now led to a governmental decision to formulate an offer to the GDR government to enter into, albeit under a number of very strict conditions, a monetary and economic community. This decision is of a political nature and is clearly outpacing Stoltenberg, faster than can be acceptable to his successor Waigel<sup>9</sup> or Bundesbank president Poehl<sup>10</sup>, but Modrow and also

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 73 (incoming, translated from Dutch): Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs BuZa 1985–1990, blok Z-299, [NA 2.05.392] inv.nr. 4601[2129].

<sup>2</sup> Jan van der Tas (1928–2009), [dodis.ch/P57557](https://dodis.ch/P57557), Dutch Ambassador in Bonn 1986–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Relus ter Beek (1944–2008), [dodis.ch/P57561](https://dodis.ch/P57561), Dutch Defense Minister 7.11.1989–22.8.1994.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Stoltenberg (1928–2001), [dodis.ch/P46108](https://dodis.ch/P46108), Defence Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–1.4.1992.

<sup>6</sup> Ludwig-Holger Pfahls (\*1942), [dodis.ch/P57562](https://dodis.ch/P57562), State Secretary for Defense of the FRG 1987–1992.

<sup>7</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>8</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>9</sup> Theo Waigel (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P54838](https://dodis.ch/P54838), Finance Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–27.10.1998.

<sup>10</sup> Karl Otto Pöhl (1929–2014), [dodis.ch/P51405](https://dodis.ch/P51405), President of the Bundesbank of the FRG 1980–1991.

people like Berghofer<sup>11</sup> stipulate that there is no time to lose in remedying the situation in the GDR: the number of “Übersiedler”<sup>12</sup> has already risen to three thousand per day and if this continues hundreds of thousands will arrive in the west in the near future. One can hardly hide the fact that the proposal cannot be regarded as entering into a monetary union between equal partners, but that in fact the entire currency policy and an important part of economic and social policy must be placed in the custody of the Bundesbank. There will probably be no time to adjust the Legal Statute of the Bundesbank<sup>13</sup> and the speaker did not deny that there was a risk that the German position of preserving the independence of the Bundesbank, an absolute priority of stability policy and a condition of economic-political harmonization for monetary unification might thus be placed in a peculiar light for some interlocutors of the FRG. (see also my 72 of today)

#### SNF

Minister Ter Beek asked his colleague about the current views of the FRG government on SNF and at what point would this topic need to be discussed in the alliance. Stoltenberg did not consider this subject to be appropriate for public discussion at present, but a negotiation concept on substrategic weapons must be formulated timely within NATO before a second round of CSE. In the federal government there is agreement on two points, namely 1) the Soviet preponderance must be phased out and 2) a responsible NATO concept is also possible with fewer than the current number of substrategic nuclear weapons. Presently, among other things, technical research is being carried out to determine whether one could do with a minimum of exclusively air based SNF. Against this, there are of course significant objections because of the vulnerability.

On the other hand, a lot has changed politically. Stoltenberg believed that the Americans are also more relaxed with regard to this subject, even if the Bush<sup>14</sup> Administration is certainly prepared to fight in Congress to keep the SNF option open. Stoltenberg thought it important in future, and perhaps soon, to speak on this subject in the first place confidentially and at a high political level, since this – it could not be denied – carried a considerable emotional charge in the Federal Republic. (Minister Ter Beek had pointed out by way of introduction that apparently Genscher<sup>15</sup>, Dregger<sup>16</sup> and Bahr<sup>17</sup> – representing the three largest parties – had come together in the rejection of SNF.)

Minister Ter Beek, pointing out that it is a deterrent weapon should of course be able to hit the enemy wherever he was, underlined that the political debate in the Netherlands remains ongoing and that it will take place in a new political

11 Wolfgang Berghofer (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57586](https://dodis.ch/P57586), Mayor of Dresden 1986–1990.

12 Übersiedler: Migrants moving from the GDR to FRG.

13 Quoted in German: Bundesbankgesetz.

14 George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

15 Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

16 Alfred Dregger (1920–2002), [dodis.ch/P54837](https://dodis.ch/P54837), Chairman of the CDU faction in the Bundestag of the FRG 1982–1991.

17 Egon Bahr (1922–2015), [dodis.ch/P39530](https://dodis.ch/P39530), Member of the SPD.

131 context. For the time being it is best to study the case thoroughly, yet with the certainty that the subject will be on the table again after CSE-1. In response to a question from Minister Ter Beek as to whether SNF would not automatically become an election theme in the FRG, Stoltenberg replied that it would probably be a theme, but after all that has happened recently it will not be the center of gravity in the election battle.

Stoltenberg repeated once again that on the one hand the FRG does not want a denuclearized Europe, and on the other hand it had not yet fixed its position on the SNF issue. Much would depend on whatever truly binding treaty agreements might be reached with the Soviet Union in the short term. However, it was certain that nuclear artillery could very well be abolished.

#### French position

Minister Ter Beek asked his colleague how the French had spoken about a.o. Pluto and Hades<sup>18</sup> in confidential discussions. His impression was that the French regarded these weapons as predominantly insurance of access to the negotiating table in the event of a possible conflict, a trauma that has persisted since the end of the Second World War. Stoltenberg acknowledged that the French remained very cautious on this point and that it is important to appeal to them increasingly. It is desirable that the French participate in ever more political forums and structures within NATO. In this context, French discussion partners like to hide behind the exclusive competence of president Mitterrand.<sup>19</sup> Stoltenberg appeared to avoid for the time being the question of whether the WEU might play a role here. Mitterrand is no fan of the WEU, but also for the Federal Republic France's further integration in NATO would be conditional on lending more substance to the WEU consultations, so that the WEU will not function as a competitor but rather as a supplier to NATO. In conclusion to this theme, Stoltenberg pointed out that the present French Prime Minister Rocard<sup>20</sup> is known to have views of his own on this issue, so that one can perhaps regard potential French cooperation with a little more optimism.

#### German unification

In response to a question from minister Ter Beek as to whether Mr. Stoltenberg has a timetable in mind for German unification he answered negatively. It is clear that a democratically elected GDR Parliament could very quickly decide to open negotiations with the FRG about unification, which, moreover, is coming about increasingly fast in a factual sense. However, apart from very important domestic political decisions, the "political completion"<sup>21</sup> of this process requires the solution of the external problems concerning the neighbors, the Allies, the "Schutzmächte"<sup>22</sup> and especially the Soviet Union. Regarding the time span that will be

18 *Pluton and Hadès were French nuclear-armed short-range ballistic missiles launched from mobile platforms.*

19 *François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.*

20 *Michel Rocard (1930–2016), [dodis.ch/P57459](https://dodis.ch/P57459), Prime Minister of France 10.5.1988–15.5.1991.*

21 *Quoted in German: Politische Vollendung.*

22 *Schutzmächte: the Allied Powers protecting Germany.*

needed from the beginning to the end of this process there are at least three views in the Federal Government. The key question here is obviously what demands the Soviet Union will make related to formal unification.

The Federal Government knows and recognizes that the Soviet Union will make demands and also has legitimate rights in this matter, but even the United States does not know where a Soviet “bottom line” might be and it is questionable whether the Russians know it themselves.

About the conceivable military configuration in a united Germany, Stoltenberg said Genscher had, as usual, released all sorts of trial balloons, but he was now resigned to the official line of the Federal Government, which has also been accepted by Minister Baker<sup>23</sup>, although apparently this has once again been contested by Fitzwater<sup>24</sup>. A central question in all of this is of course how much longer Soviet forces will (be able to) remain on the territory of the GDR.

In connection with the relevant conversations held at the 27<sup>th</sup> Wehrkundetagung<sup>25</sup> (ref my 66) Stoltenberg answered the question on how representative the opinions of Bahr and Voigt<sup>26</sup> were for the entire SPD by noting that their position certainly represented a basic current in the SPD, but that otherwise a number of SPD leaders, including Vogel<sup>27</sup>, would also have great difficulties. Much would depend on the question of whether a real safety structure can be constructed in the CSCE context built on the three pillars: the Soviet Union, North America and Western Europe.

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<sup>23</sup> James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

<sup>24</sup> Marlin Fitzwater (\*1942), [dodis.ch/P57564](https://dodis.ch/P57564), White House Press Secretary 1987–1993.

<sup>25</sup> Wehrkundetagung: annual conference on security issues, held in Munich.

<sup>26</sup> Karsten Voigt (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57565](https://dodis.ch/P57565), member of the Bundestag of the FRG for the SPD 1976–1998.

<sup>27</sup> Hans-Jochen Vogel (\*1926), [dodis.ch/P55169](https://dodis.ch/P55169), Leader of the SPD 14.6.1987–29.5.1991.

[dodis.ch/52914](https://dodis.ch/52914)

United States

*Draft letter<sup>1</sup> from the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Chancellor of the FRG, Helmut Kohl<sup>3</sup>*

Secret

[Washington,] 9 February 1990

Dear Helmut:

I know you will be hearing before your talks with Gorbachev<sup>4</sup> about the details of Jim Baker<sup>5</sup>'s discussions with the Soviets on the future of Germany. And we will have an opportunity to sit back and talk at length about some of these issues when you join me at Camp David later this month. But, as you know so well, the pace of events lately has been accelerating, and I wanted to share with you, directly, some of my thoughts about Germany and Europe's future.

<sup>1</sup> *Draft letter (copy)*: Bush Presidential Library CF00182-020. Written by Robert D. Blackwill, [dodis.ch/P57409](https://dodis.ch/P57409). Cf. the memorandum from Robert D. Blackwill to Brent Scowcroft, [dodis.ch/P57408](https://dodis.ch/P57408), from 8 February 1990: The attached memorandum to the President proposes that he send a letter to Kohl before Kohl sees Gorbachev this weekend. In drafting the letter, I have tried to take into account the substance and tone of Horst Teltschik's concerns as expressed to us on Saturday in Munich. I understand that Bob Kimmitt is also recommending to Baker in Moscow that the President dispatch such a letter and you may wish to be in touch with Baker on the subject. Recommendation: That you sign the attached memorandum to the President. Cf. also the memorandum from Brent Scowcroft to George H. W. Bush: Helmut Kohl's visit to Moscow this weekend will be the most important trip to the Soviet Union by a German Chancellor since Konrad Adenauer's visit there in September, 1955. Now, like then, the main subject will be the future of Germany and its relationship with the West. Despite great pressure from Khrushchev, Adenauer stuck to his position that West Germany would remain anchored in NATO and other Western institutions. Kohl says he intends to do the same in his talks on Saturday and Sunday with Gorbachev. That may be a bitter pill for Gorbachev to swallow, especially in the immediate aftermath of the greatest internal challenge yet to his authority. Thus, Gorbachev may well push Kohl hard on Germany's future relationship with NATO, perhaps including the role of American troops and nuclear weapons. With Kohl travelling to what may be the most portentous foreign meeting of his life, I believe you should both give him all the personal support you can and make clear to him our preferences concerning the future of a united Germany. The attached message is designed to accomplish both these objectives, while avoiding giving Kohl any impression that we are anxious about his meeting with Gorbachev. Recommendation: That you approve the attached letter from you to Helmut Kohl. *For the definitive version of the letter dated from the 9 February 1990 cf. Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik. Deutsche Einheit: Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90, ed. by Hanns Jürgen Küsters and Daniel Hoffman, München 1998, doc. 170. Two additions were made to the draft, cf. notes 7 and 8.*

<sup>2</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>5</sup> James A. Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

As you predicted when we last talked on the phone,<sup>6</sup> the situation in the GDR seems to be deteriorating quickly, forcing the pace of unification. I know this was not your preference. Still, these new developments do not alter the complete readiness of the United States to see the fulfillment of the deepest national aspirations of the German people. If events are moving faster than we expected, it just means that our common goal for all these years of German unity will be realized even sooner than we had hoped.

As unification comes ever closer to being a reality, people will be talking more and more about the role and responsibilities of the Four Powers. Let me tell you my attitude toward this question. After the end of the Second World War, going back to the time of the occupation, the main American goal for your nation was to aid in the creation of a new Germany wedded to democratic values, part of what I have called the commonwealth of free nations. Our legal rights in Germany, and in Berlin, were all aimed at protecting this objective and those values.

As I see it, no one can doubt the strength and vitality of the Federal Republic's democratic institutions. So, whatever the formal legal role of the Four Powers may be in recognizing the freely expressed will of the German people, I want you to understand that the United States will do nothing that would lead your countrymen to conclude that we will not respect their choice for their nation's future. In no event will we allow the Soviet Union to use the Four Power mechanism as an instrument to try to force you to create the kind of Germany Moscow might want, at the pace Moscow might prefer.

I would also like to confirm again to you my view of the role of a unified Germany in the Western Alliance. Naturally, this is again something for the German people, and its elected representatives, to decide. So I was deeply gratified by your<sup>7</sup> firm statement that a unified Germany would stay in the North Atlantic Alliance<sup>8</sup>. In support of your position, I have said I expect that Germany would remain as a member of NATO, while noting that NATO will have a changing mission, with more emphasis on its original political role. I know we also agree that the presence of American forces on your territory and the continuation of nuclear deterrence are critical to assuring stability in this time of change and uncertainty.

Even if, as we hope, the Soviet Union withdraws all its troops from Eastern Europe, it will still remain far and away the most powerful single military power in Europe. U.S. troops in Germany, and elsewhere on the continent, backed by a credible deterrent, must in my view continue to help preserve the security of the West as long as our Allies desire our military presence in Europe as part of the common defense. As our two countries journey together through this time of hope and promise, we can remain confident of our shared ability to defend the fruits of freedom. Nothing Mr. Gorbachev can say to Jim Baker or to you can change the fundamental fact of our deep and enduring partnership.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. document 30, [dodis.ch/52913](https://dodis.ch/52913).

<sup>7</sup> Addition in the definitive version: your rejection of proposals for neutrality.

<sup>8</sup> Addition in the definitive version: In this connection I endorse the idea put forward that a component of a united Germany's membership in the Atlantic alliance could be a special military status for what is now the territory of the GDR. We believe that such a commitment could be made compatible with the security of Germany, as well as of its neighbours, in the context of substantial, perhaps ultimately total, Soviet troop withdrawals from Central and Eastern Europe.

- 135 Let me finally say how much I understand the challenges you have had to face over the last few months, and how much I admire the way you, as a leader, have met them. Barbara<sup>9</sup> and I look forward to seeing you and Hannelore<sup>10</sup> in a few weeks.

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9 Barbara Bush (1925–2018), [dodis.ch/P57406](https://dodis.ch/P57406), *United States First Lady* 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

10 Hannelore Kohl (1933–2001), [dodis.ch/P57407](https://dodis.ch/P57407), *Wife of Helmut Kohl*.



[dodis.ch/52281](https://dodis.ch/52281)

Switzerland

*Political report<sup>1</sup> of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl<sup>2</sup>*

#### REUNIFICATION AND BLOC ALIGNMENT

*Confidential*

Bonn, 13 February 1990

Three fundamental processes of historic importance are currently taking place in Europe:

- (Western) European integration within the EC with the goal of a European Union
- The dissolution of the Eastern Bloc and thus the elimination of bipolarity in Europe in terms of security policy.
- German reunification.

The three processes are inextricably connected to each other. The interplay and causality of the latter two, however, are particularly pressing and acute. The dilemma can be put simply:

The developments in Germany have achieved a momentum that cannot be matched by the formation of new pan-European security structures intended to supersede bipolarity.

*Solution:*

- a) Either the process of reunification is slowed down and aligned with what can be achieved within the scope of Helsinki II or Vienna II, or
- b) the construction of the new Europe is adjusted to the speed of the process of reunification, or
- c) one accepts the fact that the two processes cannot be coordinated time-wise.

To predict only one of these three logically conceivable developments as likely would mean to categorise the dynamics of political developments in an undue manner.

It is more realistic to assume a mixture of the three options.

– The still unresolved question of bloc alignment certainly inhibits the process of reunification. Achieving state unity in combination with a twofold bloc alignment and the presence of American as well as Soviet troops is unrealistic, since this is inherently self-contradictory. Assurances to the contrary – also from the coalition – are to be understood more as “window dressing” and as “appeasement” of the Bloc protagonists’ worries.

<sup>1</sup> *Political report No. 12 and Telegram No. 34 (incoming, translated from German): Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010-02A#1996/400#19\* (A.21.31). Written by Jürg Leutert, [dodis.ch/P17414](https://dodis.ch/P17414).*

<sup>2</sup> *Alfred Hohl (1930–2004), [dodis.ch/P16080](https://dodis.ch/P16080), Swiss Ambassador in Bonn 1.9.1987–16.11.1991.*



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– What cannot be denied is that the German development gives rise to pressure to create new European security structures. It puts Helsinki II und Vienna II under pressure to succeed.

– Ultimately, the development certainly also contains aleatory elements. This is due, amongst other things, to the uncertainties in the Soviet Union. Would it, for instance, have the capacity and the will to resist if the GDR were to pull away? After all, come 18 March, a newly elected GDR government would be free to declare its resignation from the Warsaw Pact. The USSR troops that remain on GDR territory would then be present solely in the role of a victorious power according to the Potsdam Agreement, which would put in an entirely new light the question of Bloc alignment. As speculative as such a development may be at present: it deserves to be mentioned when one considers that what was unthinkable in Europe only yesterday is today's reality. The re-sizing of the Soviet empire, the mastering of its internal problems demand a willingness to compromise, particularly in those areas where there are no direct and vital risks in terms of security policy. Once the USSR's Western glacis is on the point of dissolving, Soviet troops stationed in the GDR over the long-term may rather represent anachronistic symbolism than a necessity in terms of security policy.

The idea of making the united Germany *neutral*, which Modrow<sup>3</sup> dug out with the support of the Kremlin, bypasses reality.

A state of united Germany's size and power by definition cannot be neutral; it lacks the essential smallness that is a condition of being-able-to-be-neutral and the interests resulting from its size make it, in the international context, an agent that is relevant in terms of security policy. Moreover: letting united Germany become neutral would mean granting it a special status that allows for an independent, unswayable policy vis-à-vis the other powers. An integration into pan-European structures increases the level of control over German foreign policy.

*Other options* are also currently being discussed:

– That the GDR will become part of NATO territory is unrealistic, since unconscionable and unacceptable to the USSR.

– A – temporary – rendering neutral and demilitarisation of the GDR would probably fail for the same reasons.

Conclusion: There is currently no solution on the horizon that could overcome the conceptual incompatibility of reunification and – provisional – Bloc alignment of FRG and GDR. Nonetheless, the reunification will not fail because of this, it will – as far as the constitutive framework is concerned – be delayed at most.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](http://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

[dodis.ch/52939](https://dodis.ch/52939)

Canada

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, de Montigny Marchand<sup>2</sup>*

OTTAWA CONFERENCE: EAST-WEST RELATIONS

Secret

Ottawa, 15 February 1990

1. We had all predicted that ministerial portion of the Open Skies conference would become significant because of its unique positioning of key players at a key time in history. Three-line full page headline of NY Times 14 Feb more than vindicates prediction: "Accord in Ottawa: West and Soviets Agree with Two Germanys on Rapid Schedule for Unification Talks: Gorbachev Accepts Bush's Troop Ceiling."

2. Ottawa meeting has obviously been unique venue for countless high level behind-the-scenes negotiations and conversations, many involving SSEA<sup>3</sup> and PM<sup>4</sup>. Baker<sup>5</sup> and Shevardnadze<sup>6</sup>, for example, had five separate negotiating sessions on Tuesday. SSEA and Shevardnadze had six hours of discussion during bilaterals on Wednesday alone. This telegram attempts to provide some of the more central assessments that were made privately to Canadians in last several days, or to others as reported to us, to inform your own discussion and analysis of events, bearing in mind that Canada is not to be a mere observer of what is taking place but a participant in the process, with views to offer, and interests to advance.

3. This telegram will not be about Open Skies. That part of conference is proceeding very well. Idea was applauded by ministers as most important confidence-building measure yet and though differences of approaches remain, there is every likelihood they will be settled in time for a treaty to be presented to ministers in Budapest in May. This will be a very considerable accomplishment. As

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. USS0039 (incoming): Global Affairs Canada file 25-3-3-5-Germany / Confidential. Written by Jeremy Kinsmann, [dodis.ch/P57447](https://dodis.ch/P57447). Addressed to Brussels, Copenhagen, Paris, Bonn, Athens, Rome, Luxembourg, Hague, Ankara, Oslo, Lisbon, Madrid, London, Washington, Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, Geneva, Brussels-EEC, Brussels-NATO, Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Dublin, Vienna, Helsinki, Stockholm, Bern, Tokyo, UN-New York, OECD, Office of the Prime Minister, Privy Council Office, National Defence Headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> Marchand de Montigny (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57449](https://dodis.ch/P57449), Canadian Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs 1990–1991.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Joseph Clark (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P55844](https://dodis.ch/P55844), Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs 17.9.1984–20.4.1991.

<sup>4</sup> Brian Mulroney (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57450](https://dodis.ch/P57450), Canadian Prime Minister 17.9.1984–25.6.1993.

<sup>5</sup> James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), US Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

<sup>6</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

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PM put it privately, a treaty is a tangible proof of achievement and progress, and we Canadians should press and press to ensure its importance is appreciated so that this achievement is realized.

4. It would be obvious to say that it was issue of German unification which dominated Ottawa meeting. Certainly this was all that Genscher<sup>7</sup> had on his mind and the driving home in corridor negotiations of the “2 plus 4” formula for its discussion with other countries was very major accomplishment (though tarnished by vivid and bitter contestation in NATO caucus of the unfortunate wording of its mandate.)

5. But to USA and USSR, the hurtling of events in Germany toward de facto unification in only several weeks’ time was part, albeit major part, of bigger tableau of unpredictability and instability which is even more major preoccupation. As Shevardnadze put it to SSEA, “situation is so complex, so urgent, and so dangerous”. It is search for predictability and stability while accommodating forces of democratization and reform which characterises the two great powers policy objectives. It is clear that they will work together in this search. Our talks with Soviets and Americans alike reveal unprecedented level of cooperation, and from USA side strenuous effort to support Gorbachev<sup>8</sup> and (Shevardnadze) politically.

6. Baker and his colleagues stressed in private discussion that while Gorbachev is secure in his control, the USSR is imploding. Government can probably cope, but not if it is subject as well to external pressures. Shevardnadze had stressed to both Baker and Genscher the shock of having been criticized by the central committee for recent USSR “losses”. “What are you doing with our security”, conservatives are saying. Unification of Germany is by far the most explosive development in view of these critics.

7. USA is therefore determined to watch its language in describing USA-USSR relations. Soviets made a fundamental shift in Ottawa bilateral talks in accepting Bush<sup>9</sup> force reduction formula in that it is asymmetric both in cuts and in end results. But they made it clear that this was not a concession. What USA side understood from that is that it would provide unacceptably volatile fuel to Moscow conservative critics if it were. USA purpose is to establish “dignity” in bilateral relations for that reason, as two sides build toward June bilateral summit with an intensity in political level discussion that is without precedent (2 more major Baker-Shevardnadze negotiations between now and June).

8. In many respects, sensitivity to USSR interests is the driving reason behind 2 plus 4 formula for handling the unification of Germany. Everyone accepts that unification is up to the Germans; it will take place and almost immediately after the 18 Mar GDR elections. The question is its political packaging as well as the need to find a formula for the controversial external aspects.

<sup>7</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>8</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>9</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

9. As Genscher put it to NATO caucus, Shevardnadze was “certainly not shy” in describing Soviet public sentiment on the issue. To SSEA, Soviet FM<sup>10</sup> said “leaders of FRG seem to understand they have gone too far.” Shevardnadze had impression that FRG partisan political process was in some respects forcing events as three FRG parties vie to outdo each other with escalation of promises. Genscher in his private conversations places stress on hemorrhaging conditions in GDR. Exodus is now at 3,200 a day; most basic public services are jeopardized. Genscher was man driven at Ottawa conference by historical feat of achieving unification. His explanation for urgency rang true, as did his satisfaction as a German statesman, but his instincts as party politician were not wholly obscured, and as Woerner<sup>11</sup> candidly acknowledged at private dinner hosted by Associate Defence Minister Collins<sup>12</sup>, both CDU and FDP have to work hard to compensate for obvious advantage held among GDR voters by SDP.

10. Point of these internal FRG political points is that we are told Gorbachev and Shevardnadze are themselves going out of their way to understand them. They are reasoning like politicians now because like all the others at Ottawa conference from Eastern Europe (except Fischer<sup>13</sup>) they now have to. But they expect their own domestic political interests to be respected by political process. Shevardnadze put it to Baker on issue of unification, “we have to be participants, not victims.”

11. This was central impulse for creating 2 plus 4 and its importance for USSR explains why NATO allies were prepared to tolerate complete absence of consultations. Both Hurd<sup>14</sup> and Baker seemed prepared to recognize that a gaffe had been committed over mandate for the foreign ministers of five (GDR becomes academic) to discuss “the issues of security of the neighbouring states.” They offered in NATO caucus at SSEA urging to ensure close ongoing consultation in NATO but Genscher was indignant and uptight about the issue. This may only mean that 2 plus 4 solution was still very fragile. Our impression is that USA-USSR formula that “internal aspects of unification are entirely up to Germans while external aspects need to be discussed with others” is going to be harder to agree upon with both USSR and German partners in practice than in theory. Dutch FM<sup>15</sup> (supported most strenuously by Italian<sup>16</sup>, Belgian<sup>17</sup>, Norwegian<sup>18</sup>) asked, “if it is a question of Polish borders only, why not say so?” There was no satisfactory answer, and since Genscher has made it very clear FRG will confirm current eastward borders expeditiously, there is potential for 2 plus 4 to be used for much more. Genscher needs it to finalize unification itself in rapidly changing landscape.

<sup>10</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze.

<sup>11</sup> Manfred Wörner (1934–1994), [dodis.ch/P57417](https://dodis.ch/P57417), Secretary General of NATO 1.7.1988–12.8.1994.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Collins (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57452](https://dodis.ch/P57452), Canadian Associate Minister of National Defence 1989–1995.

<sup>13</sup> Oskar Fischer (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P51055](https://dodis.ch/P51055), Foreign Minister of the GDR 3.3.1975–12.4.1990.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

<sup>15</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>16</sup> Gianni De Michelis (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57415](https://dodis.ch/P57415), Italian Foreign Minister 22.07.1989–28.06.1992.

<sup>17</sup> Mark Eyskens (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57464](https://dodis.ch/P57464), Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs 19.6.1989–7.3.1992.

<sup>18</sup> Kjell Magne Bondevik (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57465](https://dodis.ch/P57465), Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs 16.10.1989–3.11.1990.

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12. Question is whether it will also be used to pre-negotiate relationship of unified Germany to NATO as this relates to all of the other central security questions. This unanswered (probably unanswerable) question had non-participating NATO foreign ministers worried but fact remains that tacit purpose of 2 plus 4 is to give USSR entree to process with all of the preoccupations they bring to bear and way this plays out is hard to predict. French would argue (point made to us by Political Director Dufourq<sup>19</sup>) that there was nothing to negotiate with USSR on issue, since they had no leverage. However, USA preoccupation with USSR leadership comfort levels would suggest using 2 plus 4 as forum for arguing out at least respective points of view on stationed foreign forces and possibly more.

13. President Bush said in his press conference 11 February, "I suspect, though I cannot prove it, that some of the WTO countries want us in Europe: not as a threat, but as a stabilizing factor". From what was said privately and publicly here in last few days, President Bush's suspicion is probably right. Shevardnadze said to SSEA that he would see USA and Canada and USSR troops all out of "Europe" by 1995 and by year 2000 all forces in Europe on a nationally-stationed basis and with a defensive posture. But he also said to SSEA "we are not afraid of Canada but of Bundeswehr". He made it clear it was not with his friends Genscher and Kohl<sup>20</sup> at helm that Russians had this fear but with view to decade or so hence. All of this to suggest that process of German unification has deepest political and security preoccupations for USSR. Emotional memories of WW II are political reality. They will seek satisfaction on fundamental issues, probably in two plus four grouping.

14. This may well have implications for NATO in terms of established institutional prerogatives and process and it will have to be worked out as a NATO matter.

15. NATO fretting on this point is ironic counterpoint to most frequently made Ottawa conference joke. As WTO delegations inadvertently and repeatedly wandered into NATO caucus meetings to retrieve briefcases, or Shoppers Drug Mart purchases, left at previous session, they ritualistically intoned when they realised where they were, "We are joining, but not quite yet."

16. In public debate, WTO members at conference were relatively restrained. Plenary debate was remarkable in that almost all of the speeches from WTO and NATO used same speech-writers lexicon of political phrases about rights, democracy, openness, stability, security, etc. and for once words used meant the same to all the users. Privately, WTO delegations (except for hapless East Germans) acknowledged WTO was finished. Publicly they continued to refer to value of alliances for accelerating force reductions and arms control. To the extent that they can indulge in long-term thinking, they see arms reduction activity shifting toward an alliance-free forum, a new CSCE, but as Dienstbier<sup>21</sup> put it privately, he and others can hardly strategize past the end of each week. Shevardnadze spoke eloquently to SSEA about the serious disconnect in timing in Eastern Eu-

<sup>19</sup> Bertrand Dufourq (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57455](https://dodis.ch/P57455), Political director in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1.10.1988–27.10.1998.

<sup>20</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>21</sup> Jiří Dienstbier (1937–2011), [dodis.ch/P57467](https://dodis.ch/P57467), Foreign Minister of the CSSR 10.12.1989–2.7.1992.



rope and the USSR between political reform and economic reform. The economic reform task is much more enormous and difficult than Westerners think, he said. Laws have to be re-written, debated, approved on such fundamental issues as the nature of property. Even more significant is the established command economy network both between the USSR and the COMECON countries and within the USSR itself, which is a lot easier to wish away than to actually replace. The real problem here is frustrated expectations, a basic ingredient of the dangerous instability which so troubled the USSR internally and externally. These realizations no doubt tempered behaviour of the other foreign ministers from Eastern Europe, who (except for Poles and Czech undercutting of Karpov<sup>22</sup> during negotiations on Open Skies communique) did not take issue with the USSR (except perhaps for Czechoslovakia), bearing in mind perhaps that it was Gorbachev and perestroika which had helped put them here.

17. However, all accepted that Ottawa conference represented a new departure in attitude and direction. The question is where will it lead.

18. Given that stability and predictability are the goals, and that existing institutional structures are in flux or in case of WTO virtually defunct, tendency is to think ahead to an englobing security framework which seems to be a more muscular and more effective CSCE.

19. All delegations here were in favour of a CSCE Summit before end of 1990 – virtually all anticipated signature of CFE Agreement to be a prominent achievement of summit. But there was a range of views as to substantive preparation of summit, substance to be expected from summit, and thus from renewed CSCE itself.

20. As you know, USSR position has been in favour of “institutionalizing” the CSCE process, which seems to mean giving it ongoing secretariat and member state presence and functions to propel negotiation, consultation, and programs in political security, social, economic, and environmental areas. Shevardnadze told SSEA they saw the summit identifying the CSCE as the successor agency for the CFE I process and as the locale as well for consolidating the final post-WW II settlement process. The summit should set a mandate to enable the CSCE to encourage and eventually to codify the conversion of states to defensive military postures, as well as to engage in the other critical economic, social and environmental adjustment activities.

21. Deeper Soviet interests were also acknowledged. Shevardnadze spoke with reference to German unification of the importance for stability of USA and Canadian presence in the CSCE. He wishes to “accelerate the process of englobing structures in the CSCE.” USA officials told us that in their view USSR is also looking to stable pluralistic framework of CSCE as sort of counter to Federal instability within USSR itself. USA considers this a serious concern and will probably upgrade their own creative attention to CSCE potential in consequence. USA officials privately accept inevitability of an institutionalized CSCE.

22. Genscher also spoke of CSCE as locale for next phase of conventional weapons negotiations and as “permanent stage” for disarmament process. On unifica-

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22 Victor Karpov (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P57456](http://dodis.ch/P57456), Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union 1990–1991.

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tion, FRG is going to report to CSCE Summit on details, but does not intend any discussion or negotiation there, which, of course, remains to be seen re external aspects.

23. French too see CSCE as useful to englobe changing security situation but our conversations with Dufourcq do not reveal much in way of French thinking regarding any substantive ongoing role for CSCE itself apart from preparing 1992 FU<sup>23</sup> meeting. Other delegations including Canada do not wish to disrupt or replace 1992 meeting but believe events require concrete strengthening of CSCE before then. French views are probably unexpressed pending EC discussion and settlement of Paris-Vienna venue contest (Paris will win; [other] delegations cannot swallow even proximity of Waldheim<sup>24</sup> to summit of this character.) Surprisingly, Hurd foresaw quite considerable security role for new CSCE including notion of conflict resolution mechanism which interested SSEA.

24. These divergent views on CSCE need urgent reconciliation, at least to point where a preparatory process for summit can be identified. There were various proposals for an officials prepcom, use of Vienna CSBM forum, ministerial meetings either on the margin of Budapest Open Skies finale, or Copenhagen Human Dimension conference or a special prepcom at separate ministerial meeting. SSEA in chair at both impromptu NATO caucus and closed session of 23 [on] 13 February was not able to draw out a very open discussion of positions we know existed.

25. Tendency now will be for serious official discussion to proceed on all these issues in various venues: bilateral, 2 plus 4, and EC 12, and only then in NATO, though summit seven sherpa meetings may provide opportunity.

26. For these reasons, steps by posts to dialogue at most senior levels of host governments will be important. There is considerable credit available from Open Skies host functions and SSEA leadership to draw upon. You will have read PM and SSEA statements to Open Skies plenary. As general supplementary guidance, we would add that a reinforced and more effective CSCE process is very much a Canadian objective. SSEA found in discussion with Shevardnadze there is much Canada and USSR shared on this issue and on proposals for an active preparatory process. We shall provide more specific guidance on CSCE and on other issues shortly.

27. This telegram is to try in haste to return some very tentative analysis to those of you who have so thoughtfully contributed in recent months to our understanding of these truly momentous issues, and specifically to preparation of this very important meeting of 23 ministers which has, we think it fair to say, worked out very well. Accurate and substantial political understanding of the various needs and positions at play in the unfolding of these events will now be needed more than ever if Canadian opportunities and interests are to be aptly assessed and advanced. We count on your contribution and we shall do our best to ensure you are well positioned in regard to thinking here. More detailed and factual reports on specific meetings and sessions are, of course, going out to those concerned in usual way.

<sup>23</sup> Follow-up meeting of the CSCE.

<sup>24</sup> Kurt Waldheim (1918–2007), [dodis.ch/P15484](http://dodis.ch/P15484), President of Austria 8.7.1986–8.7.1992.

[dodis.ch/52917](https://dodis.ch/52917)

United States

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> for the President of the United States, George H. W. Bush<sup>2</sup>*

PREPARING FOR THE SIX POWER GERMAN PEACE CONFERENCE

Sensitive

Washington, D. C., 19 February 1990

We are about to enter into the most crucial period for American diplomacy toward Europe since the formation of NATO in 1949. The Six Power discussions on the future of Germany could become the principal forum in which Europe's security framework and the American role in it is determined. The U.S. must find a way to steer this new process on the future of Germany toward an outcome that sanctions full membership for a united Germany in NATO; provides for the continuation of a significant American military presence on German soil; and maintains nuclear deterrence as a pillar of NATO's defense.

Kohl's<sup>3</sup> meeting with Gorbachev<sup>4</sup> clearly showed that Moscow is resigned to German unity. The Six Power talks will, however, give the Soviet Union a chance to shape directly the terms of German unification. Moscow's primary concern will be that there be no further shift – in perception or reality – in the East-West strategic balance. The Soviets are at last feeling the full negative impact of reform in Eastern Europe as government after government there demands the removal of Soviet forces. Germany is, in that sense, the final East-West battleground and has – with its still deep emotional import in the Soviet Union – become a crucial domestic issue for Gorbachev.

When Yegor Ligachev<sup>5</sup> attacked Shevardnadze<sup>6</sup> and Gorbachev for a foreign policy that has allowed the emergence of a united Germany “which looms militarily and economically powerful”, he sounded a chord that resonates in the Soviet political elite, even among those who otherwise support perestroika. The Six Power talks, designed to give Moscow a sense of participation in the resolution of Germany's future and to shore up Gorbachev's position, could instead force his

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum*: Bush Presidential Library CF-00182.20. Written by Brent Scowcroft, [dodis.ch/P57408](https://dodis.ch/P57408).

<sup>2</sup> George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>5</sup> Yegor Ligachev (\*1920), [dodis.ch/P57414](https://dodis.ch/P57414), Second Secretary of Communist Party of the Soviet Union 10.3.1985–14.7.1990.

<sup>6</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.



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hand on the details of Germany's future – something that to now he has avoided. Vague ramblings, such as Gorbachev expressed to Kohl, about a united Germany within an all-European security system will in the Six Power context no longer do: Moscow must find some way to prevent the unification of Germany on wholly Western terms. This places us on a probable collision course with the Soviets on the question of the continued full membership of a united Germany in NATO.

The Soviets likely know that a completely neutral Germany is a non-starter with the United States, Britain and the FRG. But for Moscow some weaker form of association for Germany with NATO – perhaps excluding the Bundeswehr from the integrated military command and capping the size of the German armed forces – would be almost as good. The Soviets know that without German forces, NATO's integrated military command would be a shell. They might figure that it would not be long before pressures from the Germans and within the U.S. Congress would force the size of the American presence down and eventually out as well. The Soviets could also seek to negotiate in the Six Power forum their own continued presence in the GDR, or explicitly demand the removal of all U.S. forces from the FRG concurrent with the withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Germany.

One potential consequence of a shift in Moscow's attention to the Six Power talks is that the Soviet leadership may feel less pressure to conclude a CFE agreement. From the Soviet perspective, the Six Power forum can be used to attempt to emasculate the West German army, push U.S. ground forces out of Europe, disrupt the solidarity and viability of NATO itself, and provide political cover for their own withdrawal. These were among their principal objectives in CFE. While CFE retains its uses for Moscow, the Six Power mechanism would now allow the Soviets to pursue many of these key goals in a better forum than CFE, one that gives disproportionate weight to an East Germany dominated by the SPD, and exploits a West German government subject to extreme domestic political turbulence, while excluding lesser Allies who would join with us and London in arguing for stronger German links to NATO. The threat of Soviet reliance on the Six Power vehicle as a surrogate for CFE should be yet another spur for NATO to rapidly conclude a CFE agreement – before the Soviets shift their efforts to the higher-profile talks on Germany.

In any case, the Soviets can be expected to make in the Six Power talks a comprehensive proposal on European security and Germany's role in it. Along with the current GDR leadership, the Soviets will likely insist on severe constraints on a united Germany's association with NATO. Moscow will also use its waning influence in the Warsaw Pact – and play on Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and especially Polish fears of the new Germany – to forge a common front behind its position. (On February 14, Polish Prime Minister Mazowiecki<sup>7</sup> demanded Warsaw be involved in negotiations on German reunification.)

The degree to which this process threatens our interests depends on how carefully we structure the mandate of the Six Power discussions and whether we and our major Allies remain united on a common approach to these profound security

7 Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927–2013), [dodis.ch/P57378](https://dodis.ch/P57378), Prime Minister of Poland 24.8.1989–12.1.1991.

questions. Our goal should be to keep the focus of the Six Power talks as limited as possible – dealing only with the legal issues related to the end of Four Power rights, the consequences of the absorption of the GDR into the FRG, and the issue of what becomes of forces on the territory of Germany's eastern half. But the Soviets will press hard to widen the mandate so that all questions, including Germany's membership in NATO will be on the table. Should they succeed, you will have a difficult challenge in holding NATO viably together.

As the Six Power talks unfold, Kohl will come under pressure to find a formula for German security that is acceptable to Moscow. The Soviets will use the Six Power mechanism to try and influence German public opinion as well as others in Kohl's coalition – particularly Genscher<sup>8</sup> who will want for domestic political reasons to separate himself from Kohl on the future of European security. The Soviets could argue to an emotional German electorate that a weaker form of association with NATO is a small price to pay for German unity.

The effect of this within the FRG will be to drive German opinion to the left and to strengthen the opposition parties' influence in the domestic debate about unification. The SPD will respond to Moscow's preferences (and those of the SPD's sister party in the GDR) by moving still more to the left, toward a Germany completely out of NATO. This will drive Genscher further left (in search of the new middle ground), which in turn will pull Kohl in the same direction. Kohl would then face a situation in which Moscow, the GDR, the opposition SPD and Greens, and his own Foreign Minister<sup>9</sup> are all calling for a loosening of Germany's ties to NATO.

There is no reason to doubt Kohl's desire to keep his commitment to membership in NATO or his willingness to stand with us on the key issues of Western security. But Kohl will do what he must – even at the expense of NATO and the U.S. link – to become the Chancellor who united Germany. With history beckoning, all else will become for him secondary and negotiable.

Our crucial task will be to find a way to avoid forcing Kohl to choose between unity and full NATO membership, and simultaneously to avert a crisis with Gorbachev over the future of Germany.

Management of relations with the British and French will not be easy either. Mrs. Thatcher<sup>10</sup> will undoubtedly support our position regarding Germany's full membership in NATO but she may try to use the Six Power forum to slow down German unification. And, in any case, Mrs. Thatcher's strongly pro-NATO position will fall on deaf ears in the Federal Republic.

The French will have mixed objectives. Mitterrand<sup>11</sup> may for the present support NATO membership for Germany because the French are concerned both to keep the Bundeswehr constrained within the integrated military command and

<sup>8</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>9</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

<sup>10</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.

<sup>11</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

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to legitimize the continuation of nuclear deterrence. But France's voice is weaker because of its own position outside NATO's integrated military command. Moreover, in the longer term, Mitterrand has his own plans for a Confederation of Europe without the United States – including ultimately a new security mechanism – and for strengthening Franco-German bilateral military arrangements. This could give the French incentives to support a loose NATO structure which would, in turn, allow Paris a greater voice as the Atlantic link between the U.S. and NATO weakens. In any case, the Soviets are likely to think that they will find Paris sympathetic and we can expect an intensification of Franco-Soviet diplomacy.

Thus, if we are not careful, the dynamics of domestic politics in the FRG and diplomacy between the Allies and the Soviets could at best leave you and Kohl alone to defend effectively a Germany fully within NATO and with undiminished transatlantic security links.

In order to avoid these pitfalls, we must have a coherent strategy for the Six Power talks that plays on our strengths – the GDR's imminent collapse, Kohl's desire to do the right thing, our leadership role in NATO, and Moscow's lack of real leverage – and minimizes the potential dangers inherent in the Six Power framework. Above all, it is not in our interest to hurry this effort along, though Moscow will press for early talks. It would be a major mistake to proceed to any discussion with the Soviets before we have had an opportunity to forge a common end-game position with the British, French and West Germans. Your meeting with Kohl at Camp David will be a key in this process of consultation, giving you an opportunity to discuss the significant challenges that the Six Power process poses for Western unity and the future of the Alliance. Once we have hammered out a position among the key Allies, NATO must also have a chance to discuss and endorse the Western position.

All the Allies need a part in this process. In Ottawa several Allied ministers, notably the Italians and Dutch, protested their exclusion from the Six Power forum that would affect their security interests as Germany's neighbors. After the Italian Foreign Minister<sup>12</sup> made one such plea for involvement, Genscher turned to him and said, brutally, "You're not in the game." Genscher is wrong.

NATO as an institution needs to forge a bottom line for the outcome of the Six Power discussions on the future of the European security system. One way to do this would be for the Alliance to commission a study by a group of "Wise Men" to consider the future goals and strategy of NATO in light of the political transformation of Europe. Then you could host a Summit meeting of NATO leaders, perhaps in Washington in July immediately after the G-7 meeting in Houston<sup>13</sup>, to endorse this new concept for the Alliance – and Germany's role in it. With this added reinforcement, Kohl would find it easier to resist Soviet and domestic pressures.

In a larger sense, a delay in these Six Power discussions is favorable for us because the longer that German unity proceeds without direct Soviet involvement, the stronger will be the position of the West. As absorption of the GDR into the

<sup>12</sup> Gianni De Michelis (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P57415](http://dodis.ch/P57415), Italian Foreign Minister 22.07.1989–28.06.1992.

<sup>13</sup> Handwritten note: interesting idea??

FRG becomes a fait accompli, Soviet leverage to reshape the new FRG will decline. It is worth noting that Kohl has managed so far, including during his visit last weekend to Moscow, to move German unity along while holding fast to his promise to keep the reunified Germany in NATO. Kohl does not himself seem to be pushing for early Six Power discussions – in your recent telephone conversation he appeared to foresee the first Six Power Ministerial meeting taking place sometime this summer<sup>14</sup>.

Ideally, no meetings of any kind would take place within the Six Power framework until after the elections in the GDR on March 18<sup>15</sup>. We would simply say that the GDR's government is not legitimate and cannot speak for the German people residing there, and that we are preparing a united Western position for the talks. Indeed, we should try to delay any real discussion of security arrangements in this forum until the GDR is so weak that the Six, in fact, dissolves into Five as Germany unites.

At the present time, the Modrow<sup>16</sup> government is nothing but a second voice for Moscow. And after the East German elections, should the SPD win as expected, the new GDR government will argue for German neutrality. But with the passage of time – and if East Germany is simply absorbed into the FRG, the GDR government will cease to exist. Then Kohl would speak authoritatively on security arrangements for all of Germany which is, of course, our best bet.

Finally, the Administration needs a breathing spell to formulate a position for what could be the most important set of discussions of European security in the postwar period. It is critical that Dick Cheney<sup>17</sup> and Colin Powell<sup>18</sup> be involved because Six (or Five) Power negotiations on Germany's external security arrangements will cut to the heart of NATO and ultimately American defense strategy.

As Manfred Woerner<sup>19</sup> said to you at Camp David, we are entering the end-game of the Cold War and your own role will be decisive. The United States and the West must be impeccably prepared so that when the end-game is over, the North Atlantic Alliance and the U.S. position in Europe remain the vital instruments of peace and stability that we inherited from our predecessors.

<sup>14</sup> *Handwritten note:* Don't recall this.

<sup>15</sup> *Handwritten note:* Correct according to JRB.

<sup>16</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

<sup>17</sup> Dick Cheney (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57391](https://dodis.ch/P57391), United States Secretary of Defense 21.3.1989–28.6.1992.

<sup>18</sup> Colin L. Powell (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57416](https://dodis.ch/P57416), Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff 1.10.1989–30.9.1992.

<sup>19</sup> Manfred Wörner (1934–1994), [dodis.ch/P57417](https://dodis.ch/P57417), Secretary General of NATO 1.7.1988–12.8.1994.

[dodis.ch/52945](https://dodis.ch/52945)

Israel

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Israeli Foreign Ministry*

SUMMARY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S<sup>3</sup> VISIT TO BONN

Secret/Immediate

Bonn, 20 February 1990

During his visit the Foreign Minister had three working meetings:

Breakfast with his colleague, Genscher<sup>4</sup>

A meeting with the President of the FRG, von Weizsäcker<sup>5</sup>

A meeting with Chancellor Kohl<sup>6</sup>.

3 subjects ran through the meetings like a scarlet thread.

A) Our attitude to the reunification of Germany.

B) The sanctions of the Commission<sup>7</sup>

C) A report on our contacts with the GDR

1. Michael Shiloh has reported at length on the breakfast with Genscher<sup>8</sup>. We would add that Genscher's office asked us to refrain from publishing Genscher's support for continuing our contacts on establishing relations with the GDR.

2. The conversation with the President.

The Foreign Minister opened by passing on greetings from President Herzog<sup>9</sup> and expressing his hopes to welcome von Weizsäcker in Israel soon.

The Foreign Minister reported on our contacts with the GDR. In this context he mentioned that Foreign Minister Genscher supports this step and its continuation.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram (incoming, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives MFA 7352/17. Addressed to Europe division 1.

<sup>2</sup> Benjamin Navon (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57507](https://dodis.ch/P57507), Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, 1989–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Moshe Arens (1925–2019), [dodis.ch/P57439](https://dodis.ch/P57439), Israeli Foreign Minister 22.12.1988–11.6.1990.

<sup>4</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>5</sup> Richard von Weizsäcker (1920–2015), [dodis.ch/P5944](https://dodis.ch/P5944), President of the FRG 1.7.1984–30.6.1994.

<sup>6</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>7</sup> In January 1990 a proposal by the European Parliament to break off scientific ties with Israel because of its policies in the Occupied Territories was presented to the European Commission. Israel feared further sanctions.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Shiloh (\*1934), [dodis.ch/P57526](https://dodis.ch/P57526), the Adviser on Diaspora Affairs in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Bureau of the Foreign Minister, 18 February 1990, Israel State Archives MFA 7532/13.

<sup>9</sup> Chaim Herzog (1918–1997), [dodis.ch/P52578](https://dodis.ch/P52578), President of Israel 5.5.1983–13.5.1993.

He said that he sees the reunification of Germany as “a foregone conclusion”<sup>10</sup>. He has faith in the institutions and the democratic tradition of the FRG. He sees the extension of this tradition to the GDR as a positive development. Israelis and Jews speak, for understandable reasons, of the past, but obviously it is necessary to look towards the future.

The President thanked Foreign Minister Arens for his words about reunification and added that there is no way to foretell when it will happen.

The President thinks it is necessary not only to carry out the formal process with the Four Powers, but also to give Germany’s neighbours a feeling of confidence in a united Germany. He sees giving this feeling as a kind of unofficial legitimacy. As an aim he quotes Politburo member Yakovlev<sup>11</sup>, who said that the aim should be not a German Europe but a European Germany.

The President spoke emphatically about the Eastern border, and said that on this point Germany would leave no room for further doubt.

The Foreign Minister said that he does not see a significant difference between Germany with 61 million residents and Germany with 77 million residents. The President said that perhaps there are some neighbours who fear that the size of Germany would lead to a nationalist awakening, but he dismissed this fear on the spot.

He went on to dismiss the concept of “Fortress Europe”. He mentioned that the USSR was the last colonialist empire.

Afterwards the Foreign Minister reported on the issue of sanctions [*on Israel*] at the Commission, and expressed his confidence that Foreign Minister Genscher would be able to solve the problem at the Council of Ministers. After this the Foreign Minister reported on the peace initiative and expressed his hope that a three way meeting would take place within a few weeks.

The President spoke of the need to hold negotiations with parties and organizations with which one does not agree, and said that the Palestinians must be helped to overcome their past mistakes. In reply the Foreign Minister compared the attitude towards the refugees in the Arab world, to that in other parts of the world while giving the concrete example of how Europe would look if the Sudeten refugees were still being held in camps along the border.

The President said that he would visit Czechoslovakia on 15.3., the anniversary of the entry of the German army into Czechoslovakia. He asked us not to publish this until it was made public in both capitals.

The whole conversation lasted over an hour although only 45 minutes had been allotted. It was exceptionally marked by a most sympathetic atmosphere.

### 3. The conversation with the Chancellor.

The conversation, which was fixed for the day of the Chancellor’s announcement on East Germany in the Bundestag, a meeting with the prime ministers of the states and/or with Mitterand<sup>12</sup> in the Elysée palace, was originally allotted 15 minutes. Nevertheless, it lasted over half an hour, in a positive atmosphere. The

<sup>10</sup> English in the original.

<sup>11</sup> Alexander Yakovlev (1923–2005), [dodis.ch/P54805](https://dodis.ch/P54805), member of the CPSU Politburo 1987–1990.

<sup>12</sup> François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.



151 Chancellor apologized for having so little time that day and added that he could not “resist the charms of the Ambassador” despite the lack of time. The Foreign Minister started by sending greetings from the Prime Minister<sup>13</sup> and expressing the hope that their exchange of letters had not left any bitter aftertaste. The Chancellor said that the problem for him was non-existent.

The Foreign Minister said that he has faith in the democracy of the FRG and the extension of that democratic tradition to the GDR is desirable and a good thing. The Foreign Minister reported on his conversations with Genscher and gave details about our contacts with the GDR. He said that the East Germans had informed us that they wanted to establish diplomatic relations. We had presented a number of prior conditions.

The Foreign Minister mentioned Modrow’s<sup>14</sup> announcement and said that we are asking ourselves, in view of the approaching reunification, if there is any point in continuing contacts with the GDR. He added that Genscher supported these contacts and the establishment of relations with the GDR. Kohl replied to this that he shared Genscher’s stand but qualified this by recommending that it should not be done for the next 4 weeks (that is, until the elections in the GDR). After this, Kohl spoke at length about developments in the GDR. He said that although he had not had much belief in the stability of the regime, he did not expect such a rapid collapse. He mentioned his 10 point plan which had 3 stages. He had thought then of elections in the GDR within a year. In fact the first two stages (that is, the treaty relationship and confederation) have already been consigned to oblivion. He mentioned that there are already firms in the GDR today doing their accounts in (West) German marks. There are parts of the GDR which are breaking away from the crumbling central government. In one district the president decided to open all the borders and to declare all the Christian festivals as district holidays. A considerable number of the leaders and the mayors are in prison or under investigation. Policemen do not turn up for work since they do not want to be seen in uniform.

Kohl mentioned that a citizen of the GDR must be at least 79 in order to remember what free elections are like.

With reference to the members of the Round Table, he said that they are idealists without any experience. He described Modrow himself as an honest man and said that he is aware that his days in power are numbered and will end on 18 March. He spoke sarcastically of the retirement terms offered to party functionaries and so on, who have been promised that they will receive their salary for the next two years. Kohl said that it is as if the Gestapo members had received their salary for two years from 1945 on.

He then spoke of the question of monetary union and the GDR’s demand for 16 billion marks – a sum that will last, in his opinion, for two weeks. According to Kohl there are 200 companies in the FRG which are ready to start economic activity immediately in the GDR, if they are given suitable collateral for their investment. He mentioned that three nuclear reactors in East Germany are “in a

<sup>13</sup> Yitzhak Shamir (1915–2012), [dodis.ch/P54271](http://dodis.ch/P54271), Prime Minister of Israel 20.10.1986–13.7.1992.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](http://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

worse state than Chernobyl". Despite all this, Kohl is optimistic, since the GDR is situated in the traditional industrial area of Germany. Later he spoke briefly about the fears of their neighbours on the subject of the two [*military*] alliances and the presence of 380 thousand Russian troops in East Germany. He said that he had told Gorbachev<sup>15</sup> that if there was a clash in the GDR between demonstrators and the soldiers – that would be the end of perestroika. Kohl sees a united Germany as a factor stabilizing the peace between Eastern and Western Europe.

There is no Fourth Reich and there never will be. The new Germany has a new axis. The Versailles settlement was a historical error, but the errors of that time were not repeated. The economic axis is in the south-west, and the Rhine is the decisive river in Germany. We all have an interest in Gorbachev's success and in his remaining in office. If it were not for the developments in Germany, there would be no reform in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Towards the end of the conversation Foreign Minister Arens told Kohl that he had mentioned the sanctions in his talk with Genscher and with President von Weizsäcker. He said that Genscher had promised to act, Kohl said definitely that he opposes sanctions and in this context mentioned his stand, together with the British Prime Minister<sup>16</sup>, against sanctions on South Africa.

The Chancellor asked us to keep him up to date on this issue.

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<sup>15</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>16</sup> Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), [dodis.ch/P32055](https://dodis.ch/P32055), Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 4.5.1979–28.11.1990.



[dodis.ch/52952](https://dodis.ch/52952)

Federal Republic of Germany

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Ambassador of the FRG in Tel Aviv, Wilhelm Haas<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FRG*

VISIT BY FOREIGN MINISTER ARENS<sup>3</sup> TO BONN ON 15 FEBRUARY 1990 –  
MEDIA COVERAGE OF COMMENTS ON GERMAN UNIFICATION

Urgent

Tel Aviv, 20 February 1990, 1.55 p.m.

I.

1. Comments by Foreign Minister Arens on German unification during his visit to Bonn on 15 February<sup>4</sup> have been criticised by the Israeli press and particularly vilified in the two best-selling dailies.

In an editorial, "Maariv" speaks of "national insanity" and "moral bankruptcy" if the Foreign Minister of the "state of Holocaust survivors" welcomes reunification, expresses his trust in German democracy and so clearly signals his support for "the creation of the prerequisites for a Fourth Reich and a new Hitler<sup>5</sup>". Today's edition (Schnitzer<sup>6</sup>) reminds readers of Greater Germany's abuse of power. "Even if we are unable to do anything to prevent reunification, it is our duty .... to warn and remind people how Nazism was able to emerge from a democracy in Germany, which we ... can no longer believe after we had to pay with six million lives."

"Yedioth Ahronoth" (Ben-Orat<sup>7</sup>) asks who gave Arens permission to "now give our blessing to the creation of a Greater Germany" and to throw away "free of charge and with nothing in return the final trump card of our stance on reunification in the game against our European partners". The paper writes that Israel's

1 Telegram No. 205 (copy, translated from German): Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA B 38 Bd. 140724 Written by Heimo Richter, [dodis.ch/P57438](https://dodis.ch/P57438). Delivered by: 20 February 1990, 3.13 p.m. Also published in: Die Einheit. Das Auswärtige Amt, das DDR-Außenministerium und der Zwei-plus-Vier-Prozess, ed. by Horst Möller et. al. on behalf of the Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, Göttingen, 2015, doc. 54. Ref. Telegram No. 174, 13.2.1990: Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA, B 38, Bd. 140704.

2 Wilhelm Haas (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P57437](https://dodis.ch/P57437), Ambassador of the FRG in Tel Aviv 11.10.1985–11.9.1990.

3 Moshe Arens (1925–2019), [dodis.ch/P57439](https://dodis.ch/P57439), Israeli Foreign Minister 22.12.1988–11.6.1990.

4 According to a press release by the Federal Foreign Office of the FRG, Arens assured that after 45 years of democracy he had full confidence in the Federal Republic of Germany and its democratic institutions as well as in the advocacy of freedom and human rights expressed in the Freedom Revolution in the GDR, and thus would have complete trust in a united Germany. Translated from German from: Political Archive of the German Federal Foreign Office PA/AA, B 7, Bd. 178982.

5 Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), [dodis.ch/P535](https://dodis.ch/P535), Führer of the German Third Reich 1933–1945.

6 Samuel Schnitzer (1918–1999), Israeli journalist and editor of Maariv 1980–1985.

7 Probably Yeshayahu Ben-Porat (1927–2007), Israeli journalist and political commentator at Yedioth Ahronoth.

position on the German issue is a matter for the people. Before commenting on this issue, there should have been an in-depth debate not only in the Knesset and with the Israeli public, but also with Germans and all Europeans. "Not a single day passes when they do not spit in our faces, insult us and vilify us". However, they need Israel for one thing – "as moral legitimisation for German reunification".

The tone is much calmer in other newspapers. "Haaretz" (Schweitzer<sup>8</sup>), the third-largest paper, rates the visit as actually "pretty positive", as it proved that "Israel's policy on Europe must be based on Germany". "Germany, particularly its western part, is no longer suspected of being like its fathers and grandfathers in Auschwitz, but nevertheless it has not earned the right to have people loudly proclaim their trust in it." Today's comment is even more positive: The Foreign Minister "did well in leaving his interlocutors in Bonn in no doubt that Israel will continue to follow the events in the Federal Republic and the GDR closely in order to see if Germany remains conscious of its historic responsibility and acts accordingly".

The union newspaper "Davar" writes that the Federal Republic "has proven in word and deed its willingness to atone for the sins of the Third Reich". Neither world Jewry nor Israel can prevent reunification, it says. However, Israel can take action in two areas. Internally, it can put pressure on the German education system to ensure that "the lessons of the Holocaust continue to be taught" in a united Germany. In terms of foreign policy, it can work towards Germany renouncing nuclear weapons, supporting peace efforts in the Middle East and providing generous support to reconstruction and development projects in the region.

"Al HaMishmar" (Mapam<sup>9</sup>) describes the unavoidable reunification" as "unbearable from a Jewish point of view" because it will boost Germans' pride, influence and self-confidence, "the characteristics that led to mistakes and sins in the past". It writes that the Federal Republic has done a great deal to atone for the sins. Given the terrible extent of the Holocaust, however, the debts can never be entirely paid off.

The "Jerusalem Post" comments today that the attacks on Arens can only be understood as emotional reactions. The Foreign Minister did not give his blessing to German reunification. He merely expressed the hope that a united Germany would uphold democracy and remain aware of its duty to the Jewish people. Weak democracies, including the Weimar Republic, fell prey to totalitarianism. "Israel's role here is clear. It must use its moral power to ensure that Germany remains democratic, liberal and vigilant against signs of totalitarianism. ... As a state, Israel must endeavour to make this nation its ally and friend."

2. According to newspaper reports, some cabinet members (Likud Environment Minister Milo<sup>10</sup>, Likud Minister of Economics and Planning Moda'i<sup>11</sup> and Labour Minister of Communications Yaacobi<sup>12</sup>) have distanced themselves from

8 Avraham Schweitzer (1923–1991), Israeli journalist and member of the editorial board of Haaretz.

9 Political party publishing the Al Hamishmar newspaper.

10 Roni Milo (\*1949), [dodis.ch/P57441](https://dodis.ch/P57441), Israeli Minister of the Environment 1988–1990.

11 Yitzhak Moda'i (1926–1998), [dodis.ch/P53915](https://dodis.ch/P53915), Israeli Minister of Economics and Planning 1988–1990.

12 Gad Yaacobi (1935–2007), [dodis.ch/P57442](https://dodis.ch/P57442), Israeli Minister of Communications 1987–1990.

155 Arens and are calling for a debate on German unification. After Arens and his deputy Netanyahu<sup>13</sup> return, this debate is scheduled to take place in the Knesset at the start of next week. Moda'i explained his stance to me yesterday by saying that there had been absolutely no need for comments, as the course of events could not be changed and there was no cabinet decision and thus no government view.

3. Over the weekend, a visibly stricken Arens tried on television and in newspaper interviews to clarify the comments attributed to him. In "Maariv", he pointed out that most of his family had perished in the Holocaust and that he would "never visit Germany as a tourist". However, the Federal Republic was now a large power with democratic institutions in which he had utter trust. "Naturally, one cannot free oneself from the terrible memories, ... but as Foreign Minister I ask if that means we should break off relations with Germany".

## II.

After weeks of increasingly rational reporting and discussion in Israel on German unification, the pendulum has now swung sharply towards the emotions that the Holocaust has indelibly branded in the hearts of its victims and their descendants. The pendulum hits Arens less as Foreign Minister than as the main candidate so far to succeed Shamir<sup>14</sup>, an effect that is certainly not unwelcome to many in view of the long-standing dispute on who will take over as leader of Likud. The misunderstanding that the Israeli Foreign Minister has given a moral seal of approval to German unification was partly caused by over-interpretations by the German press and the fact that he made these comments in Bonn. The same statements in Israel (see reference telegram) (initially) had no adverse impact on Arens.

We can hope that the debate which has now been sparked will not lead the Knesset and Government to adopt a negative stance on German unification, but will instead return to and thus strengthen the more moderate path of recent weeks, that is, not to forget the past, which also involves a loss of trust in the legacy of Weimar democracy, and not to give a moral seal of approval to a united Germany, but – despite all emotional resistance and fear – to hope for and foster a continuation of the democratic path and of the Federal Republic's policy that is aware of the past.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin Netanyahu (\*1949), [dodis.ch/P57443](https://dodis.ch/P57443), Israeli Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs 1988–1991.

<sup>14</sup> Yitzhak Shamir (1915–2012), [dodis.ch/P54271](https://dodis.ch/P54271), Prime Minister of Israel 20.10.1986–13.7.1992.

[dodis.ch/52940](https://dodis.ch/52940)

Canada

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Canadian Department of External Affairs  
to the Canadian Embassy in Washington*

TWO PLUS FOUR EQUALS WHAT FOR CANADA?

Secret – Canadian Eyes only

Ottawa, 21. February 1990

You will by now have seen letter to Baker<sup>2</sup> from SSEA<sup>3</sup> which sets out another formulation of our concerns on page two. In effect, we are looking for a good interplay of close bilateral consultations and effective discussion in NAC in Brussels. British thinking sees NATO discussion as being very important. Stumbling block is probably Genscher<sup>4</sup>. Today PM<sup>5</sup> spoke with Kohl<sup>6</sup> (RGB<sup>7</sup> is sending separately PCO<sup>8</sup> prepared statement for House of Commons<sup>9</sup> reflecting on conversation) who stressed he was very conscious of his NATO colleagues concerns.

2. Senior USA personnel with whom we spoke here last week, including Seitz<sup>10</sup>, placed heaviest emphasis in creation of Two plus Four on overriding need to decompress situation for USSR. It is political need of USSR to show inside USSR they are, as USA put it, participants in unification process as it affects USSR interests and not its victims. The substantive point is that no one does really know how things will turn out a year from now in Germany, where public opinion is volatile. This probably accounts for some of reluctance you note in para 5 your telegram<sup>11</sup> to establish fixed game plans. In circumstances, all acknowledge that any assets contributing to confidence and stability need to be sustained.

1 Telegram No. IFB0032: Global Affairs Canada file 25-3-3-5-Germany / Confidential. Delivered by: 21 February 1990, 5.30 p.m. Info to Brussels-NATO, Bonn, London, Paris, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Tokyo, Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Hague, Permanent Mission in New York, Oslo, Office of the Prime Minister, Privy Council Office and National Defense Headquarters. Ref: Your tel UNGR0336 20 Feb 90, not located.

2 James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), US Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

3 Charles Joseph Clark (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P55844](https://dodis.ch/P55844), Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs 17.9.1984–20.4.1991.

4 Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

5 Brian Mulroney (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57450](https://dodis.ch/P57450), Canadian Prime Minister 17.9.1984–25.6.1993.

6 Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

7 Jacques Roy, [dodis.ch/P57644](https://dodis.ch/P57644), Canadian Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe.

8 Privy Council Office.

9 Canada; House of Commons, Debates, 21 February 1990, 8613.

10 Raymond G. H. Seitz (1940), [dodis.ch/P57399](https://dodis.ch/P57399), Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Canada in the US Department of State 1989–1991.

11 Not located.

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3. Canadian military presence in FRG is expensive and increasingly and rightly subject to skeptical scrutiny from cost point of view. We are told by many in West (and East) that Canada's presence is valued politically. If so, this needs political reflection in consultative will, USA in particular should acknowledge Canada's presence as significant.

4. Obviously changes will come in role of NATO, as well as in NATO comprehensive strategy. We are looking at possibilities regarding institutional evolution with more than open mind; we believe we shall have serious contribution to make. Baker ref to CSCE in his letter to Woerner<sup>12</sup> and Clark and others is important sign of increasing USA thought being given in Washington DC to CSCE (Seitz had commented to us here that USA acknowledges it has repeatedly "been a month or so behind everyone else" on evolving role of CSCE and would correct this tendency) and a welcome invitation to discuss CSCE organization and future effectiveness, both in NATO and bilaterally, which we shall take up.

5. As to actual NATO force deployment, and comprehensive strategy, and Canadian place in ref to them, full range of possibilities also obviously exists, and nothing is pre-ordained. Defence review will look at these.

6. In sum, your points A-D in para 6 are all sound. As to wise men idea, it is good one. Another idea possible complementary, would be to get back to ministers only no holds barred NATO discussions a la Sapiniere. In addition, UK High Commissioner<sup>13</sup> here tells us they are mulling over proposing revival of a buddy system to radiate content of Two plus Four outward to others in NATO. We do not think we would like that, preferring close bilateral consultative relationships with all of five as SSEA letters propose. But fact that we are other North American force presence in Germany would indicate that if there were a basis to be buddies on an issue, this would be basis on naturally close consultative relationship with USA.

<sup>12</sup> Manfred Wörner (1934–1994), [dodis.ch/P57417](https://dodis.ch/P57417), Secretary General of NATO 1.7.1988–12.8.1994.

<sup>13</sup> Brian Fall (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57474](https://dodis.ch/P57474), British High Commissioner in Ottawa 1989–1992.

[dodis.ch/53316](http://dodis.ch/53316)

Soviet Union

*Statement<sup>1</sup> of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union,  
Eduard Shevardnadze<sup>2</sup>*

Prague, 17 March 1990

The conversation with President V. Havel<sup>3</sup> showed that our allied countries have a vast sphere of concord on principal issues, related to the provision of European security and the settlement of German affairs.

I think we are all grateful to our Czechoslovak friends for their initiative. Where, if not here, in the center of Europe, should we discuss the central problem of today's European policy, namely the German issue?

It is worth mentioning that, from a legal point of view, consideration of the German issue in the framework of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, which was established at the time simply to protect us against a potential threat from Germany, is our direct duty.

This is about understanding the positions on the most important aspects at the moment when the decisive events begin to take place.

In this regard, I consider it necessary, at least briefly, to mention those main elements that determine the Soviet approach to these complex problems we face.

*First:* the Germans, of course, have the right to unity. The Soviet Union has never denied it and did not put forward the idea of dismembering Germany. This is well known.

*Second,* inextricably linked with the first: the Germans should take into account the rights and interests of others. In this respect, there are frameworks outlined by quadripartite agreements and decisions. And this means that the idea of self-determination, the building of German unity, can be realized only in such a way that the threat to peace will never again emanate from German soil.

*Third:* no matter how complex the Germanic issue was, it must be solved in such a way as not to destroy, but, on the contrary, reinforce positive world trends. Not undermine but advance the process of constructing a new, united Europe.

*Fourth:* since this process is inseparable from the pan-European process, a step-by-step and democratic approach is needed. The path to unification goes through the stages of forming mechanisms for the new Germany to cooperate with both

<sup>1</sup> *Statement (translated from Russian):* Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation ABП РФ ф. 742, оп. 35, п. 147, л. 8, л. 133–145.

<sup>2</sup> *Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014),* [dodis.ch/P54603](http://dodis.ch/P54603), *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union* 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

<sup>3</sup> *Václav Havel (1936–2011),* [dodis.ch/P52679](http://dodis.ch/P52679), *President of the CSSR* 29.12.1989–20.7.1992.

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the West and the East. Any other solutions, particularly one-sided ones, are unacceptable.

*Fifth:* any attempts to take decisions for the GDR, pushing it to self-liquidation, are unacceptable either from a political or from a moral point of view. As members of the Warsaw Pact, we have no right to abandon our ally. Our duty is to provide the GDR with all necessary assistance in safeguarding its interests at this crucial stage. The free expression of the will of the GDR people, the implementation of their right to choose their way by themselves – this is one thing, and quite another – direct interference in the internal affairs of the Republic from the side of the other German state is uncalled for.

*Sixth:* the Soviet people, who suffered immense loss as a result of the aggression of Nazi Germany, like other nations, are in a position to demand that all reliable guarantees should be given to prevent the recurrence of military adventures.

*Seventh:* the German problem is to be solved in the context of an unconditional securing of the postwar German borders under the international regime of law.

*Finally,* for all of us, there are numerous extremely important practical moments in the near future, in particular – an economic “slice” of the union of the GDR and the FRG. Intensive economic relations of our countries with the GDR should not suffer at any stage as a result of the convergence and rapprochement of the two German states.

Now in more details about these elements.

The most principal question is: *on what basis* should the *unification* be implemented?

Recently, the option of the factual accession of the German Democratic Republic, fully or partially, to the FRG on the basis of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Constitution of West Germany is being vigorously advocated. According to this article, as you may know, the Constitution of West Germany cannot be applied to the territory of the GDR.

What is this if not the recurrence of the Anschluss?

And that is not all. The Article mentions that “other parts of Germany”, pay attention to this, may in time join the FRG. How many of these parts are there, and where are they? The question is not simple, it is very serious.

It is in our interest neither to allow the practical application of this article, nor the other revanchist provisions of the German constitutional law. It would have been contrary to the principles of the clauses of the Potsdam agreement, which unequivocally assumed that the restoration of German statehood could only occur within the borders of the then occupied areas, in an orderly democratic fashion and based on the agreement of all the parties concerned. This would also ignore the GDR and FRG treaty obligations regarding the issues raised by Germany reunification that were adopted on the basis of postwar agreements, including the issue of the rights of the Four Powers and the GDR’s constitutional legal framework.

But that is not all. Actual absorption of one state by another would mean an undermining of the “2 + 4” mechanism created in Ottawa. It would have made other countries, including the Soviet Union, rethink their possible steps, primarily by considering their rights and responsibilities towards Germany as a whole.



We expect that the member countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization will take a firm position against the unification of Germany under the "scenario" of Article 23, meaning the unification of Germany on the basis of an *equitable* agreement between the GDR and West Germany. Specifically as a result of such a development, a new entity under international law, a successor of the GDR and the FRG would arise, allowing a fair decision on the new international status of Germany to be reached.

It will be for the benefit of all, including the Germans themselves, to ensure that the transitional period will not be brief and fleeting, so that different options can be considered: a confederation, a German union or a federation. It is up to the Germans themselves to make a choice, after careful consideration, as the final settlement of German affairs will be conditional to this choice.

Also there is a direct connection with the problem of the military-political balance in Europe. From the very beginning, we have said, and we still maintain this position: *a unified Germany should not become a part of NATO*. Otherwise, we will witness the demolition of the military-strategic balance in Europe, which is the basis of stability and security, mutual trust and cooperation, and put into question the many achievements of the all-European process. Because nowadays military blocs have not yet been transformed into political alliances, and only the first steps have been made in the field of European disarmament and the implementation of confidence-building measures, these categories will remain relevant.

Moreover, the actual policy of the country cannot but take into account the public mood. The united Germany's accession to NATO would provoke a sharp and negative reaction from the Soviet people because their memory of the last war and of everything connected with it is still fresh.

There is one path which seems to be promising: the military-political status of the united Germany should fit into the new all-European security structures, and the stages of its formation should be synchronized with the stages of formation of these structures.

We need more consistence in building inter-Germany structures while creating pan-European mechanisms of cooperation and security. Changes in the eastern part of Europe, which led to the dismantling of unsustainable bureaucratic, command-and-control models of the organization of social life and politics, correspond with the construction of a European home based on the Helsinki process.

The contacts established now between the countries of Eastern Europe and the countries of the West, the European Community, the Council of Europe, and mutual adaptation are becoming a normal and natural thing.

Today's and tomorrow's realities in Europe mean that in many ways we must take a fresh look at security issues. To overcome the inertia of bloc approaches, we need to think of continental security in terms of joint efforts and concepts, and not their polarization. The path to achieving this objective requires the gradual transformation of existing military and political alliances, the realization in their doctrines of the principle of defense sufficiency, and establishing a policy of dialogue and contacts between them.

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It is a question of replacing systems of bloc security with collective security which should also incorporate the future united Germany. Moving simultaneously from both sides is the only option to come close to such a system.

Speaking metaphorically, we see the construction of such a security system taking the form of two linked arches. Their external supports are established over the Atlantic, that is, in the USA and Canada, as well as in Eurasia, a large part of which is the Soviet Union, and they converge in Europe.

In this matter, the all-European summit scheduled for the end of the year will be called upon to play a significant role. In our opinion the German issues will take a proper place on its agenda. It appears that we have already reached a consensus on this question.

An understanding is also emerging that agreements reached within the framework of the "Two plus Four" mechanism should be confirmed by the leaders of all 35 states that are participants in the Helsinki process. What kind of form and political and legal status should these agreements acquire? This issue requires further consideration at the pan-European summit.

The question of *demilitarization* of a united Germany must be considered seriously so that its military potential meets the principle of reasonable and sufficient protection.

The flaws in the arguments that the united Germany may join NATO on the condition that armed forces from the Alliance are not deployed on the territory of the present GDR are quite obvious.

After all, not to confuse arguments, in this case the whole of united Germany would enter the sphere of the NATO treaty. If we invite Germany to join the Warsaw Pact, the West will for sure regard this as an absurdity. But is it not less absurd after the reunification of Germany to leave things in the bloc structures in Europe as they are?

Measures on demilitarization and arms limitation should embrace both parts of Germany. Otherwise it would not be a just and equitable decision, and without such a decision German affairs will not be settled.

It is equally obvious that a unified Germany should refrain from the production, possession and disposal of nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

One could also think about how to achieve a withdrawal from the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany of all nuclear weapons deployed there, along with the necessary control measures.

The question of *the presence of troops of the Four Powers* in the territory of a united Germany would probably be difficult to resolve. Their presence in the GDR and the FRG has a dual basis – quadripartite responsibilities and bilateral and multilateral obligations are directly related to the security of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO members.

Both the Soviet troops and those of the three Western powers stationed on the ground in Germany enjoy a special status. According to the previously signed treaties, they are to stay in Germany until a peaceful settlement is reached and pan-European security structures have been created. We need to discuss the number of these troops and the conditions of their stay in the country, first and fore-

most keeping in mind that they should enjoy equal rights and opportunities in Germany and not engage in any hostilities with each other.

The main issue pertaining to the vital interests of our countries, but first and foremost for their neighbors, is the future Germany's borders. It is clear that this involves the categorical rejection by everyone of any territorial pretension. The principle of the recognition of borders will be equally relevant to the Oder-Neisse border and to the borders established after the accession of the former East Prussia to the Soviet Union and Poland.

All of us have the right to demand from the Germans that they unequivocally undertake to recognize the existing borders and refrain from any attempts, either at present or in the future, to change them through means that are incompatible with international law.

In the FRG, it is believed that a peace treaty is not necessary to fix the borders, thinking it will be sufficient to confirm this from the viewpoint of the GDR, the FRG and the unified Germany; the Moscow Treaty; and other "Eastern treaties".

However, this is far from sufficient. We know how the state agencies of the Federal Republic of Germany interpret these agreements. According to their interpretation, the current borders are of a temporary nature. These interpretations, in particular the decision of the Federal Constitutional Court of 1973, have not been repealed; neither have the provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany and other legislative acts on which these interpretations are based. So the objective should be the unconditional international legal confirmation of the borders with the most reliable guarantees.

All this again brings us back to the question of concluding a peace treaty with Germany.

By the way, the obligation to conclude a peace treaty has been directly recorded both in the agreements of the FRG with the three powers and in the treaties of the GDR with the USSR. These contractual obligations must be fulfilled before the final reunification takes place and there will be an international recognition of this fact by all interested states.

Up to this point, we believe, the rights and responsibilities of the four powers remain valid. The formula fixed in the Potsdam Agreement on the prerogatives of the four powers "now and in the future" to take the necessary measures to ensure that "Germany would never again threaten its neighbors or the preservation of peace in the world" lies at the core of these obligations.

These rights are not fictitious. They cannot be declared as inactive or insignificant just because today someone is not happy with them. The very mechanism of the "Six" confirms the special role of the Powers in establishing security guarantees for all countries while the solution of the German question takes place.

Troops, communications missions, air corridors, the special status of West Berlin and many other things are testaments today to the rights and responsibilities of the powers visibly represented on German soil. All these issues are directly related to the German peace settlement, and they cannot be ignored.

In short, the purpose of the peace treaty is to conclusively determine the status of Germany in Europe in the structures of international legal order. This is the main question.

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I think you will agree that the preservation of quadrilateral rights will have a stabilizing effect on the process of movement towards German unity, making it more predictable and controlled.

Finally, it is impossible to leave unattended the real threat of the *resurgence of fascism*. This reveals itself in open and covert forms in both German states. The social roots of neo-fascism have not been removed thus far. Right wing extremism shows itself in territorial ambitions and claims of revanchist communities of compatriots and associations in the FRG.

We should obviously send a strong message to the united Germany on the question of unconditional fulfillment of the Potsdam agreement related to the prevention of the resurgence of German Nazism and the ideology of pan-Germanism in general.

Thus, the position of the Soviet Union is as follows: "yes" to the German unity, though on the condition that the interests of all European states, primarily Germany's neighbors, will be observed. Synchronization of the process of building this unity with the all-European process and the creation of security on a collective basis are necessary. Any legal or political loopholes for revisions of the borders are inadmissible. A decisive "no" to Germany's membership of NATO. Support of the movement towards the rapprochement of Western and Eastern Europe. Promotion of the allies' interests within the framework of the "2 + 4" mechanism. Supporting Poland in the area of its participation in the negotiating process, especially at the stage where issues directly affecting its interests, particularly relating to the border question, will be discussed. We agree with the Polish proposal to hold this round of talks in Warsaw. We do not rule out that besides members of the "Six", some other countries may also be brought to the table.

One should not rule out that at a certain stage some other countries, particularly those who are immediate neighbors of Germany, may join the process. Such attitudes are welcomed from NATO too. Even such countries as Canada do not think that the German affairs should be discussed only within the framework of the "Six".

Now, in more detail at the first meeting of experts of the "Six" on March 14 in Bonn. This reflected the understanding that the issues of military and political status, borders, quadripartite rights and the responsibilities, as well as the problems, of Berlin could be added to the agenda. Of fundamental importance was also the fact that all members of the "Six" could agree to invite Poland to participate in the discussion of the issues affecting its interests, particularly pertaining to the borders. It has been agreed that the work of "Six" will be consensus based.

At the same time, the FRG and some Western powers, under its influence, are so far evading the need to bring to the floor the questions related to the peace settlement, how to ensure the synchronization of Germany's reunification with the all-European process, and some proposals made by the GDR (property relations and GDR's legal inheritance). Especially Bonn has produced particular objections against the idea of the peace treaty. However, it should be clear that the cessation of quadripartite rights and responsibilities cannot happen by themselves without a peace treaty or any other appropriate form of peaceful settlement. This is why we do not consider the opinion expressed by the Western experts in Bonn as the

final say and we are going to hold on firmly to our position and seek a reconsideration of these issues at the next meetings, of course, counting on the support of our allies.

Generally the meeting in Bonn showed that the mechanism of the "Six" provides certain options for influencing and controlling the process of Germany's unification. The participants agreed to hold the next meeting during the first half of April in Berlin. As agreed, the third meeting will be held at the ministerial level.

Thus, a multilateral dialogue designed to achieve the necessary arrangements has been started, but the hard work apparently remains to be done. We have at our disposal a highly efficient tool in the form of public opinion, which is very sensitive to the entire set of German issues.

The Germans in both parts of Germany should know: we are not going to act against their legitimate aspirations. But to reach a sustainable solution, we need intelligence, realism and responsibility on both sides.

They must also know what Germany's neighbors and all the participants of the Helsinki process think about the united Germany. I mean not just the views of the governments and professional politicians, but also of the broader public. Any decision will be fragile at its core if it does not consider such factors.

In conclusion, let me say a few words on a topic that goes beyond the current agenda, about the improvement of the cooperation mechanism within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. This issue has been raised by President V. Havel.

The experts have carried out substantial work. The formulation of points related to the activities of the Political Consultative Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Defense Committee (the current Committee of Defense Ministers) have been almost agreed upon. A mutually satisfactory solution has been reached regarding the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief, the procedures for interactions between political and military bodies, and various other aspects.

In our opinion, it is possible to come to decisions on the issues that have not yet been agreed upon: the expansion of the functions of the Secretary General of the Political Consultative Committee, whom the majority of us would also like to see as a Secretary General of the Warsaw Treaty at large, and the creation of a Permanent Political Working Body.

The development of the European situation in general indicates that structures for permanent political cooperation are essential.

Having established these we would have made a significant contribution to the substantial renewal of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, increasing the component of political cooperation in its activities.

It is becoming increasingly evident that our alliance is needed, because it can play a constructive role in the formation of new joint security structures in Europe, which is the way forward to replace the existing bloc approaches.

I draw attention to the proposal brought forward by the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia<sup>4</sup> – on the conclusion of the European Security Treaty. It seems that this proposal deserves serious consideration and examination. Together, we

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4 Jiri Dienstbier (1937–2011), [dodis.ch/P57467](https://dodis.ch/P57467), Foreign Minister of the CSSR 10.12.1989–2.7.1992.

- 165** can look for solutions to issues of European security, acceptable to both the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

[dodis.ch/53317](https://dodis.ch/53317)

Soviet Union

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in East Berlin,  
Vyacheslav Kochemasov<sup>2</sup>*

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND APPROACHES OF THE USSR  
IN GERMAN AFFAIRS

East Berlin, 29 March 1990

*1. The Four Powers' responsibilities relating to Germany*

The rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers in relation to Germany have been conditioned by the defeat of the fascist Reich and its unconditional surrender, as well as by the occupation of German territory by the troops of the USSR, USA, Great Britain and France.

The annexation of Germany was not part of the allies' intentions (Declaration on the Defeat of Germany, 5.6.1945): the responsibility of the Four Powers means their obligations as agreed in particular at the Yalta (4.12.1945) and Potsdam (17.7–2.8.1945) conferences "to guarantee that Germany will no longer be able to disrupt peace in the world" (Yalta) and provide it with the chance "in due time to take a place among free and peaceful peoples of the world" (Potsdam).

The responsibilities of the occupation authorities meant the implementation of the principles of demilitarization, denazification, decartelization and democratization of Germany, so that the German people would be ready for the "reconstruction of their life on a democratic and peaceful basis" (Potsdam). The Four Powers assumed the obligation to establish the "borders of Germany or any part of it", and to determine the "status of Germany or any region being at that moment part of the German territory" (Declaration of 5.6.1945), which clearly refers to the preparation for "a peaceful settlement for Germany" as envisaged by the Allies.

This responsibility of the Allies has been completely preserved until now. It has not been affected by treaties and agreements of the USSR and the Three Powers on the established German states and has been regularly confirmed by statements of all Four Powers. The allies' decisions and agreements affirming this responsibility also remain fully in force (Yalta, Potsdam, the Declaration of 5.6.1945 and others).

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (translated from Russian):* Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation ABII PΦ, ф. 742, оп. 35, п. 147, д. 6, л. 8–30.

<sup>2</sup> *Vyacheslav Kochemasov (1918–1998),* [dodis.ch/P57389](https://dodis.ch/P57389), *Ambassador of the Soviet Union in East Berlin 1983–1.6.1990.*



## 2. *The Four Powers rights in relation to Germany*

The rights of the Four Powers in relation to the defeated Germany in 1945–49 were almost unlimited, since the occupation authorities assumed the supreme authority in the German territory and the German people were to obey them unconditionally (Declaration of 5.6.1945). Following the Agreement on the Control Mechanism in Germany dated 14.2.1944, the exercise of supreme Power was entrusted both to the commanders-in-chief of all Four Powers (within their zones of occupation) and to the Control Council in Germany, which consisted of all four commanders-in-chief (on questions regarding Germany on the whole).

The Powers of other governing bodies have been of a secondary nature, stemming from the supreme authorities.

Considering that special attention was paid to the provision of “peace and security in the future” the Four Powers particularly underscored their right to take measures on the “complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany” and to “deploy armed forces and civil structures in any part of Germany or in all parts of Germany at their discretion” (Declaration of 5.6.45).

Over time, the military administrations of the occupation zones have delegated their authorities, though not fully, to the German self-governing bodies. In connection with the formation in 1949 of the two German states, the administrations of the respective occupation zones transferred their authorities to them, albeit not completely.

On this issue the Soviet Union went much further than the three western Powers in relation to the FRG. According to the statement made by the Chief of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAG) on 10.10.1949 on behalf of the Soviet government the SMAG’s “governing functions” were transferred to the Provisional Government of the GDR, and the SMAG was replaced by the Soviet Control Commission (SCC). It was envisaged that SCC’s “objective would be to monitor the implementation of Potsdam and other joint decisions of the Four Powers in relation to Germany” and we took notice of the commitment of the GDR to these decisions. The Constitution of the GDR has not been authorized by us. However, the Statement was not the act of recognition of the GDR for its functions as the Powers reserved to the USSR had not yet been fully defined, which left plenty of opportunities both for the restoration of our rights and for the strengthening of the GDR’s self-dependence. At that point, this depended upon the Soviet side which in general preferred the second option.

The Western Powers settled their relations and the distribution of authorities with the FRG rather scrupulously. When approving the FRG Constitution worked out by the Germans they made a few reservations to retain certain important rights – the approval of future changes in the FRG Constitution, boundaries of the Federal provinces, control over the external contacts of the FRG, activities of the police structures, taking measures on demilitarization and decartelization, and monitoring the “implementation” of “the very big Powers” of the Federal state to prevent “the excessive concentration of Power” (The letter of military governors of the Western occupation zones of Germany to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Council of Germany

K. Adenauer<sup>3</sup> 12.5.1949 and Occupational Statute 10.4.1949, entered in force 21.9.1949).

Except for these and some other limitations, the FRG had the right “to exercise... full legislative, executive and judicial Power” (Occupation statute). The provisions “on the protection, prestige and security” of the troops of the Three Powers and covering occupational expenses were also approved.

Technically, the USA, Great Britain and France preserved the occupation regime on FRG territory. The FRG authorities were regarded as self-governing bodies, and the Three Powers were represented by the Supreme Allied Commission that replaced military administrations, reserving the right “to exercise sovereign Power fully or partially, if they find it necessary to provide security and maintain democratic order in Germany or to fulfill their governments’ international obligations” (Occupation Statute). Despite the abolition or mitigation of the effects of certain restrictions the aforementioned legal order remained in force in the FRG until 1955.

In 1954–55 the USSR and the three Western Powers officially granted sovereignty to the GDR and the FRG, respectively. In May 1953, the Soviet control bodies (SCC) transferred their control functions to the USSR High Commissioner, who was instructed to “represent interests of the Soviet Union in Germany and to monitor the activities of the GDR government bodies in terms of their efforts to fulfill their obligations stemming from the decisions taken by the Allied Powers in Potsdam” (The Order of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, published 29.5.1953).

In 1954 the Soviet Government made a Statement on relations between the GDR and the USSR, declaring these relations to be “the same as with other sovereign states”, and granting the GDR the ability “to be free to settle all its external and internal affairs, including the relations with Western Germany, at its discretion”. We reserved “functions related to the provision of security, proceeding from the USSR’s obligations that stemmed from the Four Powers agreements” (which also limited the functions of the USSR High Commissioner in Germany). The Soviet Government “took note” of the GDR statement on the observation by this Republic of “the obligations imposed on the GDR considering the Potsdam agreement, on the development of Germany as a democratic and peace-loving state, as well as the obligations related to the temporary deployment of Soviet troops on the territory of the GDR” (The Statement was published 26.3.1954).

The Treaty on the relations between the USSR and the GDR of 20.9.1955 ended the state of war with Germany, with a reservation that this “would not change its international obligations and would not affect rights and obligations of the Soviet Union, stemming from the current obligations of the Four Powers related to Germany at large”.

The Treaty on the relations between the USSR and the GDR of 20.9.1955 reiterated that these were equitable and based on the “mutual respect of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs” and the GDR’s right to be free to decide all its political issues. Clause 4 of the Treaty fixed the temporary deploy-

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3 Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967), [dodis.ch/P2008](http://dodis.ch/P2008), Chancellor of the FRG, 1949–1963.

ment of our troops in GDR “with the consent of its Government”, particularly on the condition that these troops would not interfere in the GDR’s internal affairs. According to the letters exchanged between the Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR<sup>4</sup> and the Foreign Minister of the GDR<sup>5</sup> the GDR reserved the right to monitor the movement of the “military personnel and the garrison shipments” of the Three Powers in West Berlin between this town and the FRG “on the base of the existing quadripartite decisions”. The USSR High Commissioner and his administration were transformed into the Soviet Embassy in the GDR. The operation of the 1955 Treaty has been limited only by the fact of the “restoration of the unified Germany as a peace-loving and democratic state” or any changes made or its termination following the voluntary stipulation of the parties.

It is absolutely clear from the entire set of documents for the period 1954–1955 (which are still in force) that in fact recognition of the GDR sovereignty was not as full and unconditional as it appeared in the text of the 20.09.1955 Treaty. The USSR functions in the GDR, as defined by the 1954 Statement, allow us more space as well as the reservation on the USSR’s obligations following the 1955 Decree. When signing the 20.09.1955 Treaty, the GDR had to proceed from these previous documents, so following the formal and judicial logic its sovereignty and our obligations not to interfere in the domestic affairs of the Republic cannot be considered absolute. It is not excluded that in the current situation in the GDR and in German affairs at large we will have to influence the events in one form or another. Thus, already it would be expedient when talking about GDR sovereignty to refer to the Soviet Statement of 1955 and the Decree of 1954 to bring these documents back in political circulation.

(It should be taken into account that the Agreement on the issues relating to the temporary stationing of Soviet troops on GDR territory authorizes the Soviet Command to take measures to address threats to our troops, after “corresponding consultations with the GDR Government, considering the current situation and measures taken by the GDR authorities”. This provision limits the freedom of our troops to act if necessary. However it could be valid only when there is a “security threat” to our troops. The obligations and rights of the USSR, as stipulated in the Order of 25.1.1955, are much broader than those needed as a legal base of our actions).

The Western Powers also agreed to abandon the occupation regime in the FRG, giving Bonn practically full sovereignty. The Paris Agreements signed 23.10.1954 and entering into force on 5.5.1955 envisaged that the FRG “will be empowered with the complete authority of a sovereign state in domestic and foreign affairs”(article 1 of the Treaty on the relations between the FRG and the Three Powers). The Three Powers reserved “the rights and responsibilities in relation of Berlin and Germany as a whole which they had previously had, including the reunification of Germany and peace treaty settlement” as well as the deployment of their troops and provisions for their security (Article 2 of the said treaty). At the same time a wide range of issues was settled relating to conflict resolution

<sup>4</sup> Nikolai Fedorenko (1912–2000), [dodis.ch/P40671](https://dodis.ch/P40671), Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, 1955–1958.

<sup>5</sup> Lothar Bolz (1903–1986), [dodis.ch/P12756](https://dodis.ch/P12756), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the GDR, 1953–1965.

between the Western Powers and the FRG according to the Treaty, the legal status of the military personnel deployed in Germany, their financing, reparations and restitution, the decartelization and limitations imposed earlier on industrial production and research, as well as on the FRG military forces (in the context of demilitarization), and the obligation of Bonn not to produce weapons of mass destruction was reaffirmed.

Considering their responsibility for Germany the US, Great Britain and France reserved the right to take the necessary measures to provide security for their troops in the FRG right up to the use of weapons on instructions from the military authorities of the Three Powers (stipulated in in the 1952 Treaty on the relations between the FRG and Three Powers, although abolished in 1968 because of the adoption in the FRG of the so-called Emergency Legislation) and to monitor Soviet flights in FRG airspace, as well as providing for mandatory “consultation” with the FRG on the cancellation of the Control Council laws and on any issues related to the implementation by the Three Powers of their “rights concerning Germany as a whole”. The most important objectives of the US, Great Britain and France have been fixed by the treaties, particularly the Peaceful Settlement, “which should become the basis for the sustainable peace” as well as determining the final borders of Germany. Before such an objective was achieved the Three Powers decided to focus their efforts on “the reunification of Germany, integrated in the European community and enjoying a free and democratic constitution like that existing in the FRG.”

Since then the USSR’s rights related to the GDR, the rights of the Three Powers related to the FRG and the rights of all Four Powers related to Germany as a whole have remained unchanged. Though the Soviet Union stated in its official notes dated 27.11.1958 and addressed to the US, Great Britain, France and the GDR that the Protocol of Agreement on the zones of occupation in Germany and administration of Greater Berlin dated 12.9.1944, along with associated additional agreements including the Agreement on the Control Mechanism in Germany dated 1.5.1945, were “considered currently null and void” (note addressed to the GDR) and “were null and void” (note addressed to Three Powers). These documents defined the borders of the occupational zones, established the Control Council and Inter-Allied Commandant’s Office in Berlin as well as military liaison missions under the Commanders-in-Chief. Besides the last question and the provisions related to Berlin, the settlement of these issues became meaningless after the cancellation of the occupation regime and the termination of the activities of the specified allied bodies on a quadripartite basis in 1948–1949, and our withdrawal from the said agreements did not affect the rights and responsibilities of the Soviet Union in German affairs. However the notes dated 27.11.1958 gave us the chance to interpret our wording in a certain way – and that was pointed out in the notes addressed to Three Powers (not GDR) – that we “only observed the following situation”, which should not be considered as an act of formal denunciation. The statement also incorporated in these documents says that “the Soviet Union can no longer consider itself bound with that part of the alliance obligations, which became unequal and is used to strengthen the occupation regime in West Berlin and to interfere in the GDR internal affairs.” In regard of the present

171 situation in Berlin we might consider this statement as untrue and irrelevant. The USSR's intention mentioned in the said note to conclude a separate peace treaty with the GDR has never been realized, and this fact also could be a weighty argument for the legal justification of our return to the said quadripartite agreements if necessary. Besides, the Three Powers have never recognized the refusal of the Soviet side with regard to its rights and obligations which facilitates our task.

As for our note addressed to the GDR, despite the categorical character of most of its statements, it also does not preclude us from the restoration of our rights, because the issue was only our (unrealized) intention to "transfer to the GDR authorities all the functions temporarily executed by the Soviet authorities on the basis of the said allied agreements and following the Agreement between the USSR and the GDR from 20 September 1955 giving the GDR the right to manage issues related to its territory, which means exercising its sovereignty on the land, in water and in airspace". This abstract shows that the Republic did not have such sovereignty, and Soviet authorities maintained their functions. Since then the situation has not changed.

It is important to take into account that the transfer of rights from all Four Powers to the corresponding German states took place with the GDR and the FRG designated as law subjects at every stage. If one or a few new German state entities were to emerge, and considering the solution of the legal succession issue, any corresponding bilateral or unilateral acts either become irrelevant, thus restoring the previous legal regime, or are passed to the new legal subject. In this context, formal aspects of possible unification are only growing in importance.

### *3. Rights and responsibilities of Four Powers towards Berlin*

The USSR and the three Western Powers follow fundamentally different legal approaches in Berlin affairs. This explains the difference in their understanding of the nature, scope and range of allied rights and responsibilities in relation to Berlin. The legal reasoning here is built on the contradictory interpretations of the respective wartime agreements and arrangements of the Four Powers. Here we mean primarily the Protocol of the Agreement of the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom on the zones of occupation of Germany and the administration of "Greater Berlin" from 12.9.1944. The Protocol, inter alia, stipulates that "Germany will be divided for the purposes of occupation in three zones, ... and a special area in Berlin will be selected to be occupied jointly by the Three Powers".

In the understanding of the Soviet side, this and other rulings on Berlin have given the city a special status within the zone of occupation of the USSR, establishing the regime of joint quadripartite administration (France subsequently acceded to the Protocol) in the city solely because of the placement of the Supreme Allied Authority, the Control Council, in the capital of the defeated Germany. This did not mean that the city became a type of fifth occupational zone, still remaining in the occupation area of the USSR, but being detached from the rest of it only in so far as was required by the practical needs of the administrative functions of each of the Four Powers separately (in their sectors) or jointly (in Berlin as a whole).

Having decided to split Germany, the Three Powers blocked the functioning of the quadripartite control bodies, which, in connection with our withdrawal

from them actually ceased to exist. Thus, the further presence of the United States, Britain and France in the western sectors of Berlin lost their legal basis, and Berlin as a whole, being originally a part of the Soviet occupation zone, had to be re-integrated into it administratively and was thus subsequently transferred to the GDR, which was created in 1949. However, by that time the Three Powers were firmly established in West Berlin and added the split of Berlin to the split of Germany. Therefore the USSR, unwilling to engage in open conflict, "tolerates" their presence in the Western sectors, as well as the implementation by the administrations of the United States, Britain and France of their occupation Powers in this part of the city. We retain, however, in principle, our rights to Berlin as a whole to the extent that they have not been transferred by us to the GDR.

The quadripartite Agreement of 3.9.1971, which was concluded in the light of the "existing situation in the respective areas", has fixed this situation "regardless of differences in legal views". Thus it did not provide the solution of legal disputes and its clause on mutual respect of "individual and joint rights and responsibilities" of the Four Powers meant recognition of these rights and responsibility only *de facto*, not *de jure*.

The United States, the United Kingdom and France are of the opinion that Greater Berlin has never belonged to the Soviet zone of occupation. In this connection they cite the provisions of the Protocol of 12.9.1944, which established when dividing the occupation zones, that the Eastern zone is "occupied by the armed forces of the USSR, except for the Berlin area, for which a special occupation order is envisaged". In support of the western viewpoint they refer to the maps attached to the Protocol on which the borders of Berlin are marked in the same way as the boundaries of the occupation zones. Thus the conclusion is drawn that the presence of the United States, Britain and France in Berlin is based on the same principles as in their respective zones of occupation proceeding directly from the fact of their victory in the war.

The withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the quadripartite control bodies did not entail their liquidation, which in the case of Berlin meant the preservation of the quadripartite Inter-Allied Commandants' Office, which only due to factual circumstances is now compelled to function only on a tripartite basis, limiting the territorial sphere of its Powers to the western sectors of Berlin. The steps taken by the Soviet Union in no way abolish the special quadripartite status of "Greater Berlin". The city still does not belong to any of the German states, and the Soviet side bears full responsibility for the Eastern sector of Berlin, including the implementation of allied decisions and agreements, which are still fully in force. The USSR also has the right to return any time to the inter-allied Commandant's office, restoring its appropriate functioning in relation to Berlin as a whole.

In accordance with such an understanding of the status of Berlin and the judicial interpretation of the current situation, the Three Powers retain their military presence and occupational regime in the western part of the city. In connection with the adoption of the Constitution of West Berlin in 1950 and with the entry in force of the Paris Agreements in 1955, they handed over a significant portion of their Power to the German municipal authorities. The Declaration of the Inter-allied Commandant's office on Berlin dated 5.5.1955 leaves absolute suprem-

acy over the authorities to the Three Powers. This is in addition to the exclusive competence of the United States, Britain and France in matters relating to the deployment of troops, occupational costs, disarmament, demilitarization and external relations (as far as it is not provided to the German authorities), as well as police control to provide security and reserves the right to intervene in areas such as restitution, reparations, decartelization, foreign property, displaced persons and refugees and persons convicted by union courts (tribunals); the occupation authorities have also retained the right to revoke any laws of West Berlin and to accept, "if deemed necessary, such measures as may be required to fulfill its international obligations, to secure order and maintain the status and security of Berlin and its economy, trade and communications".

In the case of Berlin (Eastern and Western parts) the three signatories exercise those rights that have been directly introduced or were mutually recognized in practice by all four parties. These include, for example, the freedom of movement of military personnel, as well as officers of the administrations and military liaison missions of the United States, Great Britain and France over the entire territory of "Greater Berlin", their immunity from the control of German authorities (in the GDR capital as well), military patrols etc., up to the right to freely operate flights within the Berlin control zone.

The quadripartite responsibility also remains, in the western sense, a common one with regard to Berlin as a whole. As for its content, according to the documents of the wartime and post-war periods, it was not singled out from responsibility for Germany and is identical with it. The specific element was introduced only by the Quadripartite agreement, which envisages the obligations of its participants to contribute to the "elimination of tension and prevention of complications in the relevant area", and a renunciation of the use of force, as well as unilateral changes in the prevailing situation (part I).

This joint responsibility under the 1971 agreement is also seen by us as being necessary due to existing realities, which does not change, however, the legal position of the USSR, on which the responsibility for Berlin as a whole should in principle coincide with the responsibility for the territory of the former Soviet zone of occupation of Germany.

In connection with this formulation of the question of responsibility, we have not tried to work out any specific and exhaustive definition of Soviet rights in relation to Berlin. If we follow the logic of our legal position, then the city as a whole should theoretically belong to the GDR, while only its eastern part is actually integrated into the territory of the Republic. However, we did not formally commit to any actions designed to transfer to the GDR the specific sovereignty over Berlin or at least its eastern sector. It was implied at the time that our rights relating to the GDR and Berlin were delegated to Germans in equal measure. It was no coincidence that one of the notes sent by the USSR to the Three Powers stipulated that "in accordance with the Treaty dated 20 September 1955 on relations between the USSR and the GDR and related agreements, the GDR enjoys full powers in the territory under its sovereignty, including its capital" (note of 26.9.1960). Consequently, the issue of the rights of the USSR in the whole of Berlin should be settled on the same basis as for the rest of the GDR (see para. 2).



On the other hand, there remains some legal uncertainty. This is related to the fact that *de jure*, the GDR's possession of Berlin and its Eastern part has not been directly fixed *de facto* in any document. This circumstance allows us in principle to vary our legal position. It would be acceptable, in particular, to take the view that the cessation of the functioning of the principal organs and elements of the quadrilateral responsibility does not "automatically" lead to the return of the city as a whole to the GDR. This view is supported by real circumstances (the activities of the Berlin Air Safety Centre, the preservation of the unified airspace in the Berlin control zone, the interaction of representatives of the Four Powers in Berlin, their competence in matters of the Allies' immunity, freedom of movement in both parts of Berlin, presence of forces from the Three Powers in West Berlin and Soviet forces in East Berlin), all of which testify to the special status of Berlin, including the part that is *de facto* linked to the GDR.

Proceeding from these formal and legal considerations, even the above-mentioned passage from the note from 26.9.1960 cannot be regarded (given its approach to the question) as a withdrawal of the USSR from its rights in relation to Berlin or even just the Eastern part of it. First of all, it means that the GDR only "uses" the highest authority, and does not in fact possess it. The term "use" does not indicate any final state of affairs and implies only a temporary transfer of rights and their derivative nature. The fact that the "user" has such rights depends, in principle, on the decision of the party, in this case the USSR, that granted these rights to the "user". Secondly, the reference to the 1955 Treaty and the "Zorin<sup>6</sup>-Bolz<sup>7</sup>" exchange of letters in connection with it are of great importance here. The fact is that in the text of the treaty itself, Berlin is not mentioned at all (the exchange of ratification instruments is not considered here). The exchange of letters only agreed that the GDR would carry out "guard and control at the borders of the GDR, on the demarcation between the GDR and the FRG, on the outer edge of Greater Berlin, as well as on the traffic between the FRG and West Berlin on the territory of the GDR" (with the exception of the already mentioned movements between the FRG and West Berlin of military personnel and military cargo of the Three Powers). This covers only the functions of border guard and control, as specifically recorded in a communication of the ADN agency from 9.12.1955, which explicitly referred to this exchange of letters as "the Agreement on protection and control of borders of the GDR". The delegation of authorities relating to the guard and control at borders does not mean the transfer of "full Power". Starting from the statement by the chief of SMAG from 10.10.1949 and up to the Treaty of 20.9.1955, there are no agreements or unilateral acts of the USSR that directly recognize that East Berlin belongs to the GDR, nor on the rights of the Republic in this city. It is known that in the note from 27.11.1958, in which the USSR proposed to give Berlin the status of "the demilitarized Free City", we underscored when outlining our position that "the most correct and natural solution of the question would be that which would let the western part of Berlin be reunited with the eastern part, making Berlin a consolidated city within the boundaries of the state on whose land it is located". At the moment, however, the Soviet side is consistently referring to "East Berlin

<sup>6</sup> Valerian Zorin (1902–1986), [dodis.ch/P11993](https://dodis.ch/P11993), Soviet diplomat.

<sup>7</sup> Lothar Bolz (1903–1986), [dodis.ch/P12756](https://dodis.ch/P12756), Foreign Minister of the GDR 1953–1958.

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and the GDR", which indicates that the status of these territories is not defined by us as identical. This is also confirmed by some facts – the preservation until the 1970s of the guard service on the outer edge of Berlin (including the Eastern part), the special order of dispatch for the representatives of the capital of the GDR to enter the People's Chamber of the Republic and, until 1962, the existence of the Commandant's Office in the Soviet garrison in Berlin and the special status of the capital of the GDR under national military law. It is interesting to note that at the Geneva meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers in 1959, attended by both the GDR and FRG, the delegation from the GDR took advantage of this formula, in accordance with which East Berlin only "performs the functions of the GDR capital", although it objected to the proposal of the Western representatives to extend international control over this part of the city, pointing out that it was inadmissible for the GDR "to make its sovereignty a subject of discussion and, especially, of violations" (Statement by L. Bolz from 16.7.1959).

It would be advantageous for us, under the present circumstances, to devote some effort to ensuring a special status for Berlin, especially its Eastern part, in light of the "claims" of the GDR. With a view to the forthcoming unification of Germany, we could also significantly strengthen our positions on German affairs in the talks on its settlement. Such a view of the city's legal position would also bring a rapprochement with the Western Powers, which they would welcome. Objections can in principle only be expected from the GDR and these would entail a number of practical issues related to the "restoration" of the special status of its capital (direct elections to Parliament, the status of the Deputies from East Berlin, the dissemination of laws and Government decisions, etc., roughly the same as in the relations between West Berlin and the FRG).

In this regard, it is important to determine the conditions under which such an interpretation would be appropriate and necessary for the protection of our interests in Berlin and in German affairs in the light of this perspective of the unification of the GDR and the FRG, as well as of Berlin itself.

And this concerns, obviously, the case of accession of the GDR to the FRG under article 23 of the Bonn Basic Law. The fact is that such an act of the GDR would extend, in its understanding, not only to the eastern part of the city, but theoretically also to Berlin as a whole, which would then automatically be considered by the Germans as an integral part of Germany. If we do not accept the above interpretation, we would have to accept the validity of such an act in relation to East Berlin, although not to the western sectors for which this accession is expressly prohibited by the Quadripartite Agreement. The legal separation of Berlin from the GDR would allow us, perhaps, to discipline the Germans without resorting to extreme measures (for example, to the full or partial restoration of the rights of the USSR in the GDR) and not to the practical elimination of our positions in the GDR and Berlin in the event of such an accession of the GDR to the FRG.

A similar need for the isolation of Berlin may arise at the unification of the two German states due to some other act that could invoke a similar need for the elaboration of the special status of Berlin if this happens before the development of a multilateral settlement, bringing into question the Soviet presence and the rights of the USSR in relation to Germany or in some other way violating our interests.

An important argument in favor of such an interpretation is the fact that the legal position of the Soviet troops deployed in the eastern part of the city would acquire a special character, different from the Western Group of Troops (WGT). The questions such as their continued stay in Berlin, their reduction etc. would have to be resolved in this case on a separate basis, and solutions connected with the WGT would not apply to our Berlin contingent. Thus we would have the opportunities to preserve the material rights of the USSR related to Berlin and connected with our military presence and in general provide us with a real force that is able to carry out, if necessary, the previously mentioned extreme measures to protect Soviet interests.

The most expedient option for us would be to accept as a basis of our behavior in Berlin affairs the legal reasoning of the Western Powers, following which this city enjoys a special status different from those of either German state. Its position is so dependent upon the Four Powers (the 1955 Declaration on Berlin), that it excludes any independent steps by Berlin in connection with the unification of Germany. The open transition to the positions of the United States, Great Britain and France should, however, be accompanied by the restoration of the rights of the USSR in East Berlin, or at least by our return to the Inter-allied Commandant's Office, which would once again acquire the authority relating to the eastern Sector within the decision-making on Berlin as a whole. We should avoid the impression of revival in any form of the occupation regime or its separate elements. For this reason, it would be sufficient to limit this, where appropriate, to the confirmation of common quadripartite responsibility in regard to Berlin as a whole and as a practical step to resume our participation in some minor joint actions of the victorious Powers (for example, in ceremonies for the reception of consular executives). If possible, it would be better to avoid the restoration of a Soviet presence in the Inter-allied Commandant's Office, instead proposing to the Three Powers to exercise such joint responsibility at the political level within the framework of the interaction between their administrations and our embassy in the GDR. This does not, of course, exclude the development of contacts on the military side, but without formalizing them as part of the quadripartite structure.

The transition in such a way to the legal position of the Three Powers will greatly facilitate mutual understanding during the negotiations on German unification, not only in the case of Berlin, but also for the whole complex of issues arising in relation to Germany. Following the logic of our current position, we will also escape the need to declare our own rights with regard to Berlin or its Eastern part, which would block the achievement of consensus in the negotiation process as such. It would be advisable to take this step in the near future, because, for example, given the attempts of the Federal Republic of Germany to bring about direct elections in West Berlin for the Bonn Bundestag, there is a need to prevent violations of the quadripartite agreement of 3.9.1971, and first of all its provision specifying the non-affiliation of West Berlin with the FRG. This ruling is, in principle, the last but at the same time the most clear legal statement that prevents the "Anschluss" of Berlin with the FRG, even if the GDR should accede under article 23 of the Basic Law. Having joined the legal stand of the Three Powers, it is important for us to put them in a position where the possible claims of the GDR

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to East Berlin and its involvement in the process of German unification without proper settlement become issues for all four allies, not just the USSR. This will make Berlin a sort of a regulator of the process of the merger of the GDR and the FRG, which should be exclusively in the hands of the Four Powers and would act to stabilize and safeguard the interests of all the parties concerned.

#### *4. The mechanism for resolving the German issue*

The postwar quadripartite agreements which are still in force provide a very clear procedure for the final resolution of all issues related to the defeat of Germany in the Second World War. At the conference in Potsdam, the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom agreed that this should happen within the framework of a peaceful settlement (a peace treaty was implied) for Germany. Preparation of "the relevant document" was assigned to the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) consisting of the "members representing the States which signed the conditions of surrender, dictated to the Enemy state and concerned with that task". Concerning Germany, such states are the Four Powers that signed the Act of surrender of the German armed forces and subsequently adopted the Declaration on the Defeat of Germany, having thus assumed supreme power over Germany. It should, however, be taken into account that the Three Allied Powers invited not only France, but also China to sign the text of the Potsdam Agreement and the establishment of the CFM, and this issue may in principle arise later on if the German settlement is to be conducted on the formal basis of the Potsdam decisions.

It is essential to keep in mind that by the time of the military surrender of Germany they were at war with more than 50 states in the anti-Hitler<sup>8</sup> coalition. So it cannot be ruled out that they take an interest in participating in a peaceful settlement and will make their own respective demands. The Potsdam agreements, however, do not envisage the mandatory bringing of these countries to the conclusion of a peace treaty, leaving room for other forms of considering their interests. The conference, for example, has obliged the CFM "when examining an issue which is a matter of interest for a State" that is not represented in the Council, to invite such a State, but only "to take part in the discussion and study of the said issue". In addition, the CFM may convene an "official conference of states most interested in solving any given problem", which apparently is not part of its duties. Thus, the involvement of other states in a peaceful settlement is either left to the discretion of the Four Powers, or is limited to a preliminary examination of the relevant specific individual issues. It is important for us to note therefore that the Four Powers have the right to solve the problems of peaceful settlement by themselves "in the final analysis", if they do not find it necessary to convene the above mentioned "official conference", the composition of which they will be free to decide.

As for Germany, it should accept, according to the Potsdam agreement, a peace treaty prepared by the USSR, USA, Great Britain and France. This function was assigned to the "German government suitable for this purpose". Thus, it was implied that the suitability of such a government should be recognized by the vic-

8 Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), [dodis.ch/P535](https://dodis.ch/P535), *Führer of the German Third Reich 1933–1945*.

torious powers, which would decide the issue at their own discretion (by prior agreement with each other), or should be recognized by the "official conference" of the broader composition.

The formula used in Potsdam on the "suitable ... Government of Germany", clearly implies that there should be an overall German Government by the time of the adoption of the Peace Treaty. What was quite natural at the conference of the USSR, the United States and Great Britain, now, given the conditions of existence of two sovereign German states, raises a question about the correlation of terms of unification of the GDR and the FRG and of the time frame of the German settlement, as well as the recognition of both their governments' authority to adopt a peace treaty.

The position of the Western Powers, formulated as early as the 1950s, has been the need for a preliminary unification of Germany (under the control of the Four Allies), the government of which should comply with the provisions of the Peace Treaty envisaged in Potsdam. The Soviet Union believed, on the contrary, that it would be necessary to reach a peaceful settlement even before the unification of the two German states, either by signing a relevant document with both Governments, or two separate treaties with each (because the FRG claims to be the sole representative of all Germans). The Four Powers, however, have agreed to engage the GDR and the FRG in the solution to the German problem at the preparatory stage, which was confirmed by the participation of the GDR and the FRG representatives in the Geneva Foreign Ministers meeting of the USSR, the United States, Britain and France in 1959, although the Western Powers considered these representatives to be present only as "advisers". Now it appears easier to resolve the issue of a peaceful settlement, since previously the main obstacle was the refusal of the Western Powers to recognize the GDR as a sovereign state. The United States, Britain and France are unlikely to postpone a peaceful settlement after the unification of the two German states.

However it cannot be excluded that in the West the preference would be given to some other options that do not involve the signing of a formal peace treaty with Germany stemming, for example, from the fact that the state of war with Germany has already been terminated by unilateral statements made by all the members of the anti-Hitler conflict in the early 1950s. From a legal point of view, such "Ersatz" that in any way differ from a peaceful settlement could not be the final solution to the whole complex of problems associated with Germany's defeat in the Second World War. According to the current Allied agreements, many questions have expressis verbis been left specifically for the peace treaty. The final and legally indisputable solution of the German problem can be reached only in this form, on which we should insist and which, in all likelihood, would be in the interests of the majority of the European countries.

The Ottawa document agreed by the Four Powers and the two German states does not contradict the decisions of the Potsdam Conference. The new model envisages "meetings" at the level of the Foreign Ministers of the said six countries "to discuss the external aspects of the structure of German unity, including the issue of the security of neighboring states". Such "meetings for discussions", however, cannot be tantamount to negotiations on a peaceful settlement, and therefore

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fit well into the Potsdam framework. On the basis of the 1945 decisions we could also take a rather advantageous and attractive position in the political sense by advocating the inclusion in the model envisaged by Potsdam of such countries as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and others in the further discussions (planned after those in Ottawa).

In the light of the Potsdam Conference and the Ottawa decisions, the process of preparing and concluding a German peace settlement could be divided into several stages. The first of these would be the preliminary consultations of experts and the meeting of the USSR, the USA, Great Britain and France, with the GDR and the FRG representatives at the Foreign minister level as agreed in Ottawa. This would contribute to the initial elaboration of a certain range of issues, after which it would be possible to convene – again in accordance with the Potsdam decisions – the “official conference” of the most interested States, including the GDR, the FRG and the neighboring countries. This conference would be empowered to conclude the peace treaty in its final form. The final stage would be to endorse this document at the meeting of the CSCE with states participating at the highest level, which would, without any detailed reconsideration of the Treaty, recognize and confirm the conclusion of the German peace settlement by issuing a special act or a declaration. Then all these documents could be registered at the UN. Within the framework of the proposed procedure we would obviously seek to strengthen the interaction of the Four Powers, which would serve as a kind of “rod” supporting the entire negotiating mechanism. It is possible to encourage and invite the Three Powers to such cooperation from the Soviet side, as the Potsdam decisions envisage preliminary discussions among the members of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs “before the involvement of other interested States”, although this is not necessary. Depending on the position of the future GDR government, it would be advisable for us to come to a preliminary agreement with it on the relevant issues.

It appears that we do not seem to be able to avoid widening the circle of participants in the talks on the German peace settlement, although this could hinder quick and effective negotiations. It is known that a number of States have already expressed their interest in participating (Poland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway). The Four Powers, according to the Potsdam agreements, will not be able to shy away, at least formally, from the participation of such countries in the consideration of certain specific issues. It cannot, however, be ruled out that some countries may insist on equal access to the negotiation process as a whole. Their exclusion from the settlement of the German problem could cause serious problems afterwards, if some of Parties question its legality precisely because of the refusal to invite them to the settlement of issues of the unification of Germans together with the most interested States.

There is a serious chance that the process of rapprochement between the two German states will proceed at a very rapid pace, leading to their unification even before or during the formal negotiations on a peaceful settlement. The creation of a united Germany in such a case will put before the Four Powers the question of their rights in it (responsibility persists) and, therefore, how it should be treated as the process of achieving a peaceful settlement evolves. The range of solutions to

this problem extends theoretically from the full restoration of allied rights, which consequently would mean the perception of such a unified state as the object of the negotiations before the recognition of its sovereignty, as is already the case of the FRG and the GDR, to its consideration as an equal party to the negotiations, i.e. their subject. The choice of any of the options will obviously depend on the specific circumstances of the unification of the two German states, and for the time being it is practically impossible to predict the character of such circumstances in their entirety. At the same time, the Four Powers are entitled, by virtue of their responsibilities for Germany, to define for themselves their approach towards the emerging unified state. However, it is impossible to exclude that in the case of the unification of the GDR and the FRG, the USSR, the United States, Great Britain and France will not be able to avoid the involvement of other participants in the consideration of the question of the identity of the new German state and its recognition as an equal party to the settlement. Some sort of guarantee to prevent the emergence of this complex of problems could be provided by the obligation undertaken by the participants in the talks even before the negotiation process starts not to change the existing situation and not to contribute to its change.

##### *5. The subject and form of a peaceful settlement*

The range of issues to be included in a peaceful settlement is predetermined by the Allied decisions in their most general form. The declaration of the defeat of Germany envisages the establishment of the borders and the statute of Germany or any part of it. The Potsdam Accords directly stipulated the inclusion of the two border issues on the agenda for a peaceful settlement – the western border of Poland and the border of the Königsberg district.

As for the “statute” of Germany, the list of related problems is obviously conditioned by the responsibility of the Four Powers for German affairs, primarily their responsibility for the provision of a democratic system and ensuring the peace-loving nature of the German State. This should take into account the basic principles of the Potsdam demilitarization, denazification, decartelization and democratization of Germany, as well as the implementation, or conditions of implementation that would necessarily be embodied in the peace settlement.

The situation which emerged in Germany and around Germany in the post-war period will inevitably require amendments to this settlement. The education and long-term development of the two independent German states on different tracks, with various international ties and commitments, raises rather important questions of succession, belonging to different alliances (blocks) and international organizations.

In view of the existence of special Allied rulings on Berlin, this issue is also subject to a special dispute resolution within the framework of a peaceful settlement. A necessary element of a peaceful settlement, in the final analysis, must be to ensure the absolutely equal status of Germany in the international community. In this regard, the peaceful settlement must repeal the rights and responsibilities of the Four Powers relating to Germany, as well as confirming the cessation of the state of war with Germany and of the occupational regime there.

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A necessary element of a peaceful settlement should be the establishment of a mechanism to monitor and verify the implementation of the relevant agreements. It would be expedient to also include in the settlement some decisions regarding the basis of the further development of relations between its participants.

In the event that the unification of the two German states does not take place prior to reaching a peace settlement, it would be necessary to introduce into this settlement provisions affirming the right of the German people to self-determination and the establishment of a unified state. Here, it is necessary to specify that after their unification the GDR and the FRG will ensure the legal continuity of a German state in terms of a peaceful settlement.

The form of a peaceful settlement has not been clearly determined by Allied decisions, although one may find references to the peace treaty in some documents (the Potsdam agreements in particular). This issue may be resolved depending upon its mechanism, its content and its specific circumstances at the discretion of the parties to the settlement. It would probably be technically difficult to accept a single "all-inclusive document". For that reason this could be a question of drafting a number of documents whose legal status may coincide or differ. In such cases they should be combined in decisions ensuring the integrity of the whole complex of settlements and the mutual coherence of respective documents.

Considering that at the present time, when almost 45 years have passed since the end of the Second World War, the formalization of a settlement in connection with the unification of Germany as a "peace" settlement could be perceived (primarily by Germans) as an anachronism, the solution of the whole set of issues should be given a different image (leaving intact the subject of the settlement). It is expedient to resort in this case to more general designations of the settlement itself (Act, Charter, Code, etc.) and its territorial coverage (Central Europe, Europe).



[dodis.ch/52282](https://dodis.ch/52282)

Switzerland

*Political report<sup>1</sup> of the Swiss Ambassador in Bonn, Alfred Hohl<sup>2</sup>*

TOO EARLY?

Confidential

Bonn, 10 April 1990

A state secretary of the Federal Foreign Office excitedly remarked to the signatory that Bonn had been confronted with the task of reunification 20 years too early, pure and simple. "We are not yet integrated into Europe fully enough and the chances of German-national upsurges remain much too real."

Meanwhile, in Europe, the perpetuum mobile of 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century national problems, connected to the dissolution of empires, amongst other things, is keeping busy the Balkan states most of all, whose borders were arbitrarily drawn, back in the day, right through ethnic territories and thus from the start ensured considerable controversy. The same goes for the dissolution of the Soviet empire built by the Czars and their epigones that intended, for instance, to bring together Europe and Asia, Christianity and Islam in the grip of its party-bureaucratic manner of rule. Is Europe now about to face a general rise of those who came up short e.g. in Versailles, Potsdam, and Yalta?

In Hessen, nationally inspired unknowns are thought to have recently painted the slogan "Ami go home" on a wall, and the press there discussed governor Wallmann's<sup>3</sup> alleged plans to house one's own lodgers and migrants in living quarters becoming vacant with the Americans' withdrawal. In my opinion, however, this is for now only rumour-mongering by the media that is not to be taken seriously.

We have already reported elsewhere, however, that the Germans' basic mentality, a kind of penitent's attitude combined with the readiness to help the weak and disenfranchised, has at least partially changed. The thinking here is once again German first, although most of my interlocutors attest to the chancellor's<sup>4</sup> reliability in term of European politics. Kohl possibly means to ultimately become not only the chancellor of reunification but also Europe's deus ex machina. As the French have so far reserved this role for themselves, things will get interesting. Delors<sup>5</sup> surely has as little interest as Mitterrand<sup>6</sup> in letting Kohl pave the way

1 *Political report No. 24 and Telegram No. 97 (incoming, translated from German): Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010-02A#1996/400#19\* (A.21.31).*

2 *Alfred Hohl (1930–2004), [dodis.ch/P16080](https://dodis.ch/P16080), Swiss Ambassador in Bonn 1.9.1987–16.11.1991.*

3 *Walter Wallmann (1932–2013), [dodis.ch/P56923](https://dodis.ch/P56923), Minister President of Hesse 1987–1991.*

4 *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

5 *Jacques Delors (\*1925), French politician, [dodis.ch/P47396](https://dodis.ch/P47396), President of the European Commission 7.1.1985–24.1.1995.*

6 *François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](https://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.*

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for European success. But the chancellor's ambitions are apparently growing increasingly more global: a German-German monetary union, reunification, united Germany participating in Europe, a European monetary union, the relinquishing of national prerogatives of political sovereignty to a European executive and its parliamentary substructure.

A daring transformation from the German "Michel" to Euro-citizen. At times, it almost seems this way.

One may thus honestly wonder why the above-cited state secretary of the Federal Foreign Affairs Office thinks that the reunification barged in 20 years too early. Are there really still national territorial ambitions here as in the times of the Prussian kings, of Bismarck<sup>7</sup>, or of Hitler<sup>8</sup>? As far as Kohl is concerned: no. With him, one rather feels a true willingness to let Germany come to bloom as a part of Europe. This is genuine and reminiscent of Walter Hallstein<sup>9</sup> – with the one nuance that the chancellor reasons more sentimentally. When he speaks of the German-French handshake over the graves of Verdun, he does so with a tearful voice. Compared to this attitude, the advocates of federations of Expellees, including Schönhuber's<sup>10</sup> camarilla, remain a rather ephemeral Don Quixotism.

Generally speaking, nationalism these days appears to have become the religion of the poor. It rages in Kosovo, Romania, or Bulgaria – soon perhaps also in Albania. Here, German saturation in the context of the materialism fuelled by Erhard's<sup>11</sup> "Wirtschaftswunder" seems to have mostly eradicated the infamous appetite for "Lebensraum". One rather pursues ideas of qualitative growth.

Kohl may ultimately disappoint many ambitions and hopes: for instance, the still existing feelings of entitlement regarding lost territories in the East, or GDR hopes for prosperity through an automatic bonanza, French aspirations to push for European integration according to concepts created in Paris, etc.

Whether reunification, then, is coming around 20 years too early is hard to tell. Such fears are based on the assumption that, preferably, the FRG would have been irrevocably and strongly rooted in Europa for now. But revolutions elude all timing. And no one can say whether a process of Europeanization controlled by French computers and coupled with a postponed reunification would have produced more suitable results.

In fact, why does no one make use of Kohl's almost clumsily lovable openness to Europe? Why does everyone suspect the ponderous giant from the Palatinate of deviant Germanic Machiavellianism? Why, by contrast, the premium for Oskar<sup>12</sup> the tin drummer from the Saarland?

7 Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), [dodis.ch/P3822](http://dodis.ch/P3822), Chancellor of the German Empire 1871–1890.

8 Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), [dodis.ch/P535](http://dodis.ch/P535), Führer of the German Third Reich 1933–1945.

9 Walter Hallstein (1901–1982), [dodis.ch/P2869](http://dodis.ch/P2869), Civil servant in the FRG Foreign Office who had the "Hallstein Doctrine" that meant that the FRG would regard it as an unfriendly act if third countries were to recognize the FRG, named after him and President of the Commission of the European Economic Community 1958–1967.

10 Franz Schönhuber (1923–2005), [dodis.ch/P54840](http://dodis.ch/P54840), journalist and politician of the FRG, founder and later chairman of The Republicans.

11 Ludwig Erhard (1897–1977), [dodis.ch/P2893](http://dodis.ch/P2893), Chancellor of the FRG 1963–1966.

12 Oskar Lafontaine (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P54839](http://dodis.ch/P54839), Minister President of Saarland 1985–1989 and SPD candidate for Chancellor in the German federal elections of 1990.

**184** Europe has often seen dishonest politics. But in my opinion, Bonn is not currently a target of legitimate suspicions in this regard. Perhaps the reunification came too early for the keepers of the grail of European distrust, but so far, the chancellor seems to be coping just fine with the enormous problems he is facing.

[dodis.ch/52946](https://dodis.ch/52946)

Israel

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, Benjamin Navon<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Israeli Foreign Ministry*

GDR – FRG – ISRAEL. FOLLOWING OUR TELEGRAM NO. 73 OF 12.4.<sup>3</sup>

Secret/Usual [priority]

Bonn, 16 April 1990

A) For the first time a coalition government has been formed in East Germany which was elected by democratic process. The coalition agreement sets the following goals:

1. Ensuring prosperity and social equality for all citizens of the GDR.
2. Freedom and justice for all.
3. Realizing in a speedy and responsible way the reunification of Germany after negotiations with the FRG on the basis of Article 23 of the Constitution (of the FRG). This will be a contribution to the “peaceful settlement” of Europe.

B) In the opening meeting of the new East German parliament (Volkskammer), a resolution was unanimously adopted which says:

... It was Germans who during the period of national socialism inflicted immeasurable suffering on the peoples of the world. Nationalism and racial madness led to genocide, particularly among Jews from all European countries, among the peoples of the Soviet Union, the Polish people and the Sinti and Roma [the Gypsy people]....We ask the Jews all over the world for their forgiveness. We ask the people in Israel to forgive us for the hypocrisy and hostility shown in official GDR policy towards the State of Israel, and to forgive the persecution and degradation of Jewish compatriots in our country, also after 1945....[The new government must act to establish] We declare that we will strive for [the establishment of] diplomatic relations with the State of Israel<sup>4</sup>.

C) Paragraphs A and B give expression to the subjects which interest us:

1. The temporary existence of the GDR, which will pass through most or all of the stage of union with the FRG within one to three years.

<sup>1</sup> *Telegram (incoming, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives MFA7352/18. A handwritten note was added: 1. For the minister 2. The GDR file. Another handwritten note was added: I don't know if Benny Navon is clever, but modest he isn't. The name "Navon" means "wise" in Hebrew.*

<sup>2</sup> *Benjamin Navon (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57507](https://dodis.ch/P57507), Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, 1989–1993.*

<sup>3</sup> *The Israeli Embassy in Bonn and the Information Department to Europe 1 Division, Eastern Europe Division and the Press Division, 12 April 1990, Israel State Archives, MFA7352/18.*

<sup>4</sup> *See the English translation of the declaration in Israel State Archives, P 4731/2. Navon's translation into Hebrew, given in square brackets, is slightly different from the original.*

2. The GDR's confrontation with its past and request for forgiveness and pardon from the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

3. Expression of a wish to establish diplomatic relations with the State of Israel.

To this we must add the unambiguous FRG aspect, which is that the President<sup>5</sup>, the Chancellor<sup>6</sup> and Foreign Minister Genscher<sup>7</sup> have encouraged and approved the idea that we should establish diplomatic relations with the GDR. The Israeli aspect is also quite unambiguous. East Germany has fulfilled our conditions (which we never defined as such) for opening negotiations on establishing relations.

Things had already begun to move during Hans Modrow's<sup>8</sup> term as prime minister (both in his letter [to *Yitzhak Shamir*] and the statements made to Michael Shiloh<sup>9</sup> in the Copenhagen talks) and received official status in the resolution of the East German Volkskammer quoted above.

The question may be asked why establish relations at all with a German state which will disappear in the foreseeable future. To this I suggest four replies:

1. Our support in principle for universal relations between states.

2. The GDR's fulfillment of our "conditions".

3. The political leadership of the GDR, where the parties are largely a reflection of the parties in the FRG, will rapidly merge into the leadership of the FRG as reunification approaches and will become part of the leadership of Germany. East Germany of today will become five of the sixteen states of united Germany. It is essential to encourage this leadership as part of Germany's future leadership.

4. In our negotiations with the GDR, we must tactfully and with restraint make a case for our demands from that state, in the knowledge that the burden of answering those demands will fall mainly on the FRG.

D) We no longer have any reason to play the game of the SED – the game of Honecker<sup>10</sup> and Oskar Fischer<sup>11</sup>. Bonn is no longer in the eyes of the East German government of de Maizière<sup>12</sup> and Markus Meckel<sup>13</sup> "the capital of the revanchists", where everything is bad. On the contrary, Bonn is the capital of the state which the GDR will join according to Article 23, in the foreseeable future. We should not, therefore, continue with the anachronism of showing consideration for the outdated SED ideology, consideration which may definitely be seen in the FRG as attempting – even if only symbolically – to continue the division of Germany.

5 Richard von Weizsäcker (1920–2015), [dodis.ch/P5944](https://dodis.ch/P5944), President of the FRG 1.7.1984–30.6.1994.

6 Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

7 Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

8 Hans Modrow (\*1928), [dodis.ch/P54796](https://dodis.ch/P54796), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 13.11.1989–12.4.1990.

9 Michael Shiloh (\*1934), [dodis.ch/P57526](https://dodis.ch/P57526), Adviser on Diaspora affairs in the Israeli Foreign Ministry and Israel's representative at the talks with the GDR in Copenhagen.

10 Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

11 Oskar Fischer (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P51055](https://dodis.ch/P51055), Foreign Minister of the GDR 3.3.1975–12.4.1990.

12 Lothar de Maizière (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4.–2.10.1990.

13 Markus Meckel (\*1952), [dodis.ch/P54793](https://dodis.ch/P54793), Foreign Minister of the GDR 12.4.–20.8.1990.

- 187 In the light of all the above, I propose a decision on opening negotiations to establish relations between us and East Germany, on the lines that have been mentioned. The site of the talks should be Bonn. I have no doubt that the GDR government will accept this and the FRG government will approve. The symbolism will be clear. I would be grateful to be appointed as the head of the delegation for the negotiations<sup>14</sup>. Since we will establish relations with a state which has adopted as its slogan its temporary status and the end of its existence by means of a merger with West Germany, it is appropriate that our relations with it should reflect this situation. My status as non-resident Ambassador in East Germany will certainly be welcomed in Bonn and East Berlin.

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14 *This sentence and the last one are underlined.*

[dodis.ch/49550](https://dodis.ch/49550)

Switzerland

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs*

GDR — NEW GOVERNMENT AND POLICY

Bern, 18 April 1990

This Wednesday, 18.4., GDR Ambassador (B[ibow])<sup>2</sup> contacts me with the following requests:

1. He presents the *joint declaration by all factions of the People's Parliament* of 12.4.1990 (attachment<sup>3</sup>). The declaration, whose main points were made known by the media, constitutes, in B[ibow]'s words, a general reckoning with the German people's deplorable past, disowned by the GDR until now, as well as with more recent inglorious GDR activities. Official apologies are made to the Jewish people and Israel, to the Soviet Union, to the ČSSR (for the suppression of the Prague Spring), and the inviolability of the current Polish Western border is noted.

2. B[ibow] furthermore emphasises the new government's interest in *bilateral relations* with Switzerland. He enquires about a possible date for the visit, already agreed on in principle, of State Secretary Jacobi<sup>4</sup> in Berlin. The signatory confirms this interest and suggests July 1990<sup>5</sup>.

The ball is now in the GDR's court, which intends to provide a specific suggestion for a date as soon as the identity of the host, the foreign ministry's future No. 2, is known. According to B[ibow], the current interim incumbent, Fleck, is most likely to be supplanted (Nier<sup>6</sup> has been retired a while ago) and replaced by a DSU politician (the CSU of the GDR). The new foreign minister, Social Democrat Meckel<sup>7</sup>, has already stated that he will accept a DSU member.

1 Memo (translated from German): Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010A#1999/250#7145\* (B.73.0). Written by Daniel Woker, [dodis.ch/P27996](https://dodis.ch/P27996), signed in Woker's absence by Heidi Ifrid, [dodis.ch/P57668](https://dodis.ch/P57668). Copies to the Federal Office for Foreigners' Affairs (FOFA), the Federal Office of Foreign Economic Affairs, five copies for internal use of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), and to the Swiss Embassy in East Berlin. Following references on visa questions were included for the FOFA: the FOFA draft of 16 March 1990, [dodis.ch/53405](https://dodis.ch/53405), the FDFA answers of 27 March 1990, [dodis.ch/53407](https://dodis.ch/53407) and [dodis.ch/53410](https://dodis.ch/53410) and the letter of the Swiss Embassy in Berlin of 7 February 1990, [dodis.ch/53402](https://dodis.ch/53402).

2 Eckhard Bibow (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P54792](https://dodis.ch/P54792), GDR Ambassador in Bern 1986–1990.

3 Joint declaration by all factions of the People's Parliament, 12 April 1990, [dodis.ch/52352](https://dodis.ch/52352).

4 Klaus Jacobi (1929–2004), [dodis.ch/P19511](https://dodis.ch/P19511), State Secretary of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs 1989–1992.

5 The visit took place on 11 October 1990.

6 Kurt Nier (\*1927), [dodis.ch/P51057](https://dodis.ch/P51057), Deputy Foreign Minister of the GDR 1973–1989.

7 Markus Meckel (\*1952), [dodis.ch/P54793](https://dodis.ch/P54793), Foreign Minister of the GDR 12.4.–20.8.1990.

189 3. Finally, B[ibow] comes to the *topic of visa*. He says that at his embassy, the practical difficulties in coping with Swiss visa applications are growing. (A Swiss visa application has to be submitted through a travel agency and after 4 – 8 weeks and approval procedures by internal GDR authorities (according to B[ibow] for securing accommodation, amongst other things) reaches the local embassy to be issued.) He, B[ibow], can grant an immediate issuing of visa only in exceptional cases. I draw B[ibow]'s attention to the discrepancy between terms (GDR 4 – 8 weeks, Swiss visa for GDR citizens no more than 24 hours); B[ibow] has already broached this subject with Berlin and will now do so again, in order to gain leeway from his authorities for the immediate issuing of visas.

Basically, B[ibow] and the signatory agree, however, that the problem can only be solved by suspending the visa requirement. B[ibow] declares the GDR government's willingness to temporarily abolish the requirement, with immediate effect, based on an informal, oral, and mutual declaration. After a trial period, the abolition can be contractually settled. This is how the GDR proceeded with Austria, for instance.



[dodis.ch/53318](https://dodis.ch/53318)

Soviet Union

*Interview<sup>1</sup> by the Irish Times with the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union,  
Eduard Shevardnadze<sup>2</sup>*

ANSWERS OF E. A. SHEVARDNADZE TO QUESTIONS  
OF THE IRISH NEWSPAPER "IRISH TIMES"

[Moscow,] 26 April 1990

1. *Question.* What guarantees will the Soviet Union seek to ensure that German unity will not become a threat to the security of other countries?

*Answer.* The movement towards the unification of Germany – that is, of course, a historic event. It means the implementation of the legitimate, deepest aspirations of the German people. It draws a line under the postwar era in the life of Europe and at the same time determines the content of this process.

The political and military structure of Europe created as the outcome of World War II, despite all its shortcomings during almost half a century, has provided stability and peace on the continent. A new, emerging European structure should at least have the same properties. This is an all-European task. All the interested states should make a productive contribution to its solution, though, of course, the four powers, including the Soviet Union, are endowed in this case with a special responsibility.

The main thing, obviously, is to find such a military and political status for a united Germany which would not radically upset the balance of power. This, in our opinion, would be fully achievable if Germany becomes a non-aligned country in the military sense with the armed forces potential intended only for defense purposes.

Another guarantee, the value of which cannot be overemphasized, is the coherence of the movement towards the unification of Germany with efforts to create all-European security structures.

2. *Question.* How does the Soviet Union see the role of the national integrity of Germany in the political and military structure existing now on the European continent?

<sup>1</sup> *Interview (translated from Russian):* Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation АБПРФ, ф. 757, оп. 35, п. 197, л. 12, л. 55–63об. For the published version of the interview cf. The Irish Times, 28 April 1990, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

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*Answer.* The unified Germany wouldn't fit into the present military and political European structures without problems. These structures were built when the two German states were part of different alliances and not for a unified Germany.

The prospect of German unification is an important incentive, giving us a chance to fundamentally reform the current structures of the European security – in effect, to recreate them. Anyway, like any serious work, it will take time and a transitional period. In any case, it would be a mistake if in the course of building German unity we destroy the existing security system without replacing it with a new one.

3. *Question.* Could the Soviet Union, under any conditions accept the united Germany as a member of NATO?

*Answer.* Membership of the united Germany in NATO is unacceptable for us, since this would mean a radical break-up of the current balance of power in Europe. From the Western side we expect the understanding of the impossibility of such an option. It is necessary to jointly seek other solutions that would not undermine anyone's security. Such solutions are achievable if we retain the basis of reality and respect of our mutual interests.

In searching for such solutions, we shouldn't limit ourselves to the familiar recipes. For example, there was the idea of a double membership of the united Germany in NATO and the Warsaw Pact. I would like to highlight such an option once again, although someone in the West has tried to dismiss it out of hand. Though this option may seem non-standard, that does not mean that it is unrealistic. Anyway, one must understand the arguments of those who believe that the idea of "double membership" may not only help to find the solution for one of the most difficult questions arising in connection with the unification of Germany, but could instead be a practical step towards creating European security structures. The territory of Germany would turn into the testing ground for the constructive interaction of blocs, a place of their gradual diffusion. Generally, this is something to think about. Germany itself would not lose anything with such a decision.

4. *Question.* How do you assess the role of the European Communities in the framework of the CSCE in the new conditions?

*Answer.* The "Twelve" have always played a prominent role in determining the main directions of the development of the Helsinki process, they have often facilitated the search for mutually acceptable solutions and reasonable compromises. We hope that the EC member states will bring their political power and influence, together with the other participants in the all-European process, in the current rapidly developing situation in Europe to ensure its development in conditions of stability. We particularly appreciate the EC's support of our initiative to convene a CSCE summit in 1990. We are ready for the most active cooperation with the "Twelve" in practical preparations for this meeting, providing a qualitatively new impetus to the development of the CSCE process as a whole.

5. *Question.* How does the Soviet Union see the work of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe under the new conditions?

*Answer.* Today it is already obvious that it is not only desirable, but necessary to maintain the existing momentum in the development of the all-European process. The question of the future of the CSCE process will undoubtedly be one of the central themes on the agenda of the European summit. A meaningful exchange of views on the options for European development would contribute to the formulation of agreed conceptual approaches and the formation of a future European community, taking into account both the ideas of Mikhail Gorbachev<sup>3</sup> about “a common European home”, François Mitterrand’s<sup>4</sup> proposals for a “European Confederation” and the ideas of Mark Eyskens<sup>5</sup> on the “confederal commonality of Europe”, as well as the views expressed by other countries.

Many good ideas have been put forward on the formation of all-European structures. In addition to the well-known Soviet proposals for the establishment of the All-European Council, consisting of the heads of states, the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the CSCE countries and the Center for the prevention of military threats, there are proposals from the FRG, Poland and Czechoslovakia. Thus, there is something to think over and to discuss, considering the interests of Europe, present and future.

6. *Question.* How do the “2 + 4” talks affect the process of the development of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe?

*Answer.* There is a direct connection. The movement towards the united Germany should not hamper the building of the common European house and we believe it would be utterly unacceptable if it disturbs the balance of power and stability in Europe, calling into question the positive results achieved within the framework of the CSCE. On the contrary, the convergence and unification of the two Germanies are set to become an integral part of the broad efforts to establish a new way of European life based on peace and cooperation.

Proceeding from this understanding, the Soviet side stands for discussing within the framework of the “Six” the issue of the synchronization of building German unity with the CSCE process. We share the approach of those states which believe that the results of the work of the “Six” should be considered and possibly approved at the meeting of the CSCE members at the highest level.

7. *Question.* Will the Soviet Union as a participant of the “2 + 4” talks insist on addressing the issues affecting the interests of other European countries, including a peace settlement in Europe?

*Answer.* The Soviet Union as a participant of the discussions of the “Six” is guided not only by its own national interests, but also by the broad interests of European security. Doing things differently would be irresponsible. Today, it is impossible for someone to build security at the expense of other countries, it could be relevant only if the interests of all European countries are taken into account.

3 Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](http://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

4 François Mitterrand (1916–1996), [dodis.ch/P13775](http://dodis.ch/P13775), President of France 21.5.1981–17.5.1995.

5 Mark Eyskens (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57464](http://dodis.ch/P57464), Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs 19.6.1989–7.3.1992.

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In the course of work specific questions will probably arise affecting the interests of countries that are not members of the "Six". In our view, it should be possible to involve them in the discussions in the "Six" at corresponding stages.

The building of the German unity brings a practical dimension into the question of the elaboration of an international legal settlement to draw a final line under the past war.

The most correct form of such settlement would be a peace treaty or an equivalent document in which the issues relating to the military-political status, the question of borders etc., would find their solutions. We think that such a document could be worked out within the framework of the "Six" with the active participation of the two German states.

8. *Question.* How do you see the role in the all-European process of military neutral countries such as Austria, Ireland and Sweden?

*Answer.* We believe that any country can make an important contribution to the CSCE process as it has been conceived as a non-aligned structure with the decisions taken by consensus. Therefore, the voice of any country is essential. The three countries you mentioned, along with other neutral and non-aligned countries are actively involved in all-European cooperation and each of them has made a solid contribution, though in its own way, to its development. Now, when the confrontation between the countries belonging to the military blocs vanishes, the reconciliatory role of neutral countries, of course, is becoming less important, although it still remains valid. This has been confirmed in particular by the Conference on Economic Cooperation in Europe which took place in Bonn, where the draft of the final document was represented by the "N + N" group.

Today, when the question of the necessity to create the new security structures has become extremely urgent, every country participating in the European process should contribute to this work. This concerns not only bloc countries but all the nations of the continent. Security is indivisible, and all the members of NATO and of the Warsaw Pact want it to be strengthened, as do militarily neutral countries like Austria, Ireland, and Sweden.

9. *Question.* How do you see the development of relations between the USSR and the countries that are members of the European Communities within the framework of the political and economic cooperation in a changing Europe?

*Answer.* The current changes in Europe are a good start to raise the political and economic cooperation between the USSR and the European Communities to a qualitatively new level.

In the context of the ongoing rapprochement between the East and the West, we consider it possible and realistic to set a task that will focus our political dialogue with the European Communities on the gradual transition from a simple exchange of views, through a comparison of our positions to practical interaction and partnership in consolidating positive changes in Europe and throughout the world. It seems that the USSR and the "Twelve" could become co-authors of many specific ideas and steps towards the formation of the European community of the XXI century.

The USSR-EC agreement on trade, commerce and economic cooperation is an example of a fundamentally new approach to the economic cooperation of Eastern and Western Europe, a kind of future outlook. It is a practical contribution where both sides work together to lay the economic foundation of the common European home. Obviously, it is time to think together about the establishment of some permanent all-European structures of economic cooperation which would help to reconcile the economies of the East and the West with a prospect of reaching a common European economic space from the Atlantic to the Urals.

*10. Question.* Both Moscow and Dublin critically commented on the unrealized opportunities in Soviet-Irish relations. What could be done about this, and are there plans for a meeting at the level of foreign ministers to sign, for example, an agreement on cultural cooperation, following the understanding reached two years ago?

*Answer.* It must be recognized that for a long time our relations with Ireland have been given a sort of residual attention. Honestly speaking, we did not really feel that the Irish side sought to provide any real drive in its relations with the Soviet Union. With all this, there is little reason to talk about any kind of coolness or alienation in bilateral relations. Since their official establishment in 1973 there have been no acute or unpleasant problems between Dublin and Moscow. On the contrary, our countries have always respected each other. Another thing is important as well. There have always been a lot of similarities and even coincidences in our approaches towards the central problems of European and regional policy. We highly appreciate the contribution of Ireland to the all-European process, the settlement of regional conflicts and the UN peacekeeping activities.

A new political era in world affairs, which started with Perestroika, opens up new opportunities for the development of Soviet-Irish relations on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Ireland and his talks with Charles Haughey<sup>6</sup> in Shannon on 2 April 1989 are considered by both sides to be the most important reference point characterizing the translation of the entire complex of bilateral relations into the phase of dynamic and constructive cooperation. It can be said with satisfaction that the results of the visit are quite successful and they are being implemented with regard to the deepening of the political dialogue between the two countries, the expansion of economic and cultural ties, and of parliamentary exchanges. A lot has already been done on these fronts, although, of course, this is only the beginning.

It has been mutually agreed to include plans for Soviet-Irish contacts at the high and highest levels visits of prime minister Ch. Haughey and Foreign Minister G. Collins<sup>7</sup>. Both our countries are willing to have these visits, and preparations have already started. Today this is particularly important because of Ireland's chairmanship in the EC, as Dublin enjoys the status of the capital of the integrating Western Europe in the current half-year. However, unfortunately, circumstances can just get the *better of us* sometimes. An extremely busy calendar of events requiring special attention on the part of the Soviet leadership does not

<sup>6</sup> Charles Haughey (1925–2006), [dodis.ch/P42316](http://dodis.ch/P42316), Prime Minister of Ireland 10.3.1987–11.2.1992.

<sup>7</sup> Gerry Collins (\*1938), [dodis.ch/P57504](http://dodis.ch/P57504), Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs 12.7.1989–11.2.1992.

- 195        make it possible to set the exact dates. To complete the picture, I would like to say that besides the visits we maintain other contacts with the Irish leadership. I had and I have opportunities to engage in dialogue with the Foreign Minister of Ireland either within the framework of the UN General Assembly, or other forums, including all-European forums.

[dodis.ch/52920](https://dodis.ch/52920)

United Kingdom

*Guidance Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Douglas Hurd<sup>2</sup>, to British Representatives Overseas*

GERMAN UNIFICATION

Restricted

London 23 May 1990, 6 p.m.

*Introduction*

1. Unification is moving swiftly. The 2+4 talks on external aspects have begun in earnest.

*Line to Take (Unclassified)*

2. – Glad 2+4 process underway. Constructive and conciliatory Ministerial meeting on 5 May agreed agenda for future work and pattern of future meetings.  
– Much to do. Can now see way to completing work on external aspects in harmony with internal unification process.

*Additional Points (Unclassified)*

3. *Shevardnadze<sup>3</sup> Proposal to Decouple Internal and External Aspects?*

– We agree with Chancellor Kohl<sup>4</sup>. Would be undesirable (see para 14 below), to decouple internal and external aspects of unification. Aim to complete in the same timeframe. Significant that Soviet Union now accepts that unification will and should proceed.

4. *Will a Unified Germany be in NATO?*

– Western countries, including the FRG, believe that a united Germany must be in NATO. So do East European members of the Warsaw Pact. A neutral or non-aligned Germany would not contribute to stability or security in Europe.  
– Principle I of Helsinki Final Act sets out the right of every country to decide whether or not to be a member of a military alliance.  
– But no interest in exploiting the situation to the Soviet Union's disadvantage. Aim is to find a durable solution which takes account of others' legitimate concerns.

<sup>1</sup> *Guidance Telegram No. 31: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office RS 021/1/90.*

<sup>2</sup> *Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.*

<sup>3</sup> *Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.*

<sup>4</sup> *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

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– We are considering bilaterally (and in the 2+4) how such concerns can be met. Likely to include special transitional arrangements for territory of former GDR.

– Soviet Union must recognise that other developments in Europe (strengthened CSCE, progress on arms control, NATO changing) are helping to meet its legitimate concerns.

#### *5. Incorporation of GDR in EC?*

– Want to see GDR integrated into EC as fully, quickly, smoothly and transparently as possible. Have endorsed Commission's framework for this process. Look to them and FRG/GDR to keep Council fully in picture.

– Basically, see EC *acquis* in all areas applying to ex-GDR territory from unification. But some temporary derogations may be needed where EC standards cannot be met at once (e.g. environment).

– Important that measures taken under German economic and monetary union before political union are aligned with EC law.

#### *6. German Borders (Especially Border with Poland)?*

– Clearly important that this issue should be settled definitively.

– Welcome agreement among Poland, GDR and FRG that Poland's western border (Oder-Neisse line) should be enshrined in a treaty. Poland invited to 2 + 4 Ministerial in Paris in July, when borders will be on agenda. Poles will also attend the official level meeting which will prepare for this.

#### *7. Position of Berlin?*

– Western protecting powers and Soviet Union will need to discuss with the Germans how the Four Power regime in Berlin might best be wound up. Agreed that this will be on the 2+4 agenda.

#### *8. Risk of Fourth Reich?*

– No. FRG has changed fundamentally since Nazi period. Forty years of well established liberal democracy. A close partner and ally.

#### *9. Right of Others to Have a Say?*

– Internal aspects of unification are primarily a matter for the Germans themselves. We have always supported their right of self-determination on a democratic basis.

– Four Powers have rights and responsibilities relating to Berlin and Germany as a whole. But the establishment of the 2+4 framework is not meant to exclude others or intrude upon decisions for other fora. Relevant issues are discussed in e.g. NATO and EC.

#### *10. Role of CSCE?*

– Outcome of 2+4 should be laid before CSCE summit.



11. *Future of Soviet Forces in GDR?*

– Yet to be agreed. Primarily a matter between the FRG and Soviet Union but FRG, as NATO member, have indicated their intention to consult closely with allies. But it is envisaged that there might be a transitional period when some Soviet forces remained temporarily in what is now the GDR, after unification. We have no wish to cause instability through sudden change.

*Background (Restricted – may be drawn on with trusted contacts)*

12. The first 2+4 Ministerial took place in Bonn on 5 May, preceded by preparation at Political Director level. Future meetings are planned for East Berlin in June, Paris in July (when the Poles will attend), Moscow in September and then Washington and London. Political Directors also met on 22 May and will meet again on 9 June and, probably, 4 July.

13. The agenda agreed for future talks is:

- Borders
- Politico-military issues, bearing in mind approaches for suitable security structures in Europe
- Berlin
- Final settlement under international law and termination of the Four Power rights and responsibilities

14. The main development in Bonn on 5 May was Shevardnadze's proposal that the internal aspects of unification (which could be settled quickly by the Germans) and the external aspects (which should be subject to a transition period during which 4 power rights would be continued) should be de-coupled. The Germans have since firmly rejected this proposal. It would prolong the Soviet locus in German affairs: continue singularisation of Germany by limiting her sovereignty after unity: and create false parallelism between the presence of Allied and Soviet forces in Germany. The issue was not raised at the 2+4 official level meeting on 22 May.

15. The Russians also aim to secure an outcome which restricts the freedom of German action such as limits on the *Bundeswehr*, united Germany not (not) in NATO integrated structure etc.

16. The Ministerial meeting in June is likely to focus on structure of a final settlement including ending of provisional nature of borders, Berlin and termination of Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities. Politico-military issues are also likely to be aired. But the Western Four are determined that the 2+4 should not (not) take decisions on issues which are the responsibility of other fora, e.g. CSCE, CFE, SNF and NATO. There may be some cross reference to these. But 2+4 should act as no more than a "post-box".

199 17. Russian concerns might be met by referring to developments in these other fora and to acts of German self-determination such as over NBC weapons.

18. Internally unification is moving swiftly. The FRG/GDR State Treaty providing for economic, monetary and social union was initialled on 18 May and has passed to the two German parliaments for ratification. Target date for GEMU<sup>5</sup> itself is 2 July. The signs are that the GDR may move towards state unity with the FRG by the turn of the year with Kohl now going for all-German elections in December or January, dropping the FRG elections scheduled for 2 December.

19. The Western Four are taking care to keep NATO and EC partners fully briefed both multilaterally and individually. The Dutch and Italians have been particularly sensitive.

20. For further background see paragraphs 12–21 of Guidance telno 11 of 28 February<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> *German Economic and Monetary Union.*

<sup>6</sup> *These paragraphs gave an overview of progress towards unification and the challenges ahead.*

[dodis.ch/53173](https://dodis.ch/53173)

Poland

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Polish Military Mission in West Berlin*

MEMORANDUM CONCERNING SOME PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CURRENT PHASE  
OF THE PROCESS OF GERMANY'S REUNIFICATION

West Berlin, 28 May 1990

1. An analysis of the current phase of German-German relations shows that the reunification process is being influenced by:

- election results in Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia;
- after a monetary and economic union is introduced: expected social and economic problems in the GDR and a scarcity of democratic (and, to a degree, party) structures in the GDR, which supports the argument for the current German government to push through a programme of absorbing the GDR pursuant to Art. 23 of the FRG constitution;
- Mr Kohl<sup>2</sup> perceiving greater chances of success in early federal elections rather than later ones;

and external factors such as:

- no objection from the three western powers against rushing the reunification;
- pessimistic outlook for developments in the Soviet Union (to complete before the possible fall of Gorbachev<sup>3</sup>). The Soviet Union's position has been noticeably weakening; Shevardnadze's<sup>4</sup> position on future roads to Germany's unity is considered to be little thought-out and giving Kohl the green light. Taking Germany out of NATO is absolutely ruled out, which is why next steps from the Soviet Union are being anticipated. All actions by the USSR are being widely commented on (pulling out troops from the GDR and halting talks on conventional arms reduction).

2. After the initial period of close relations among the four powers, a slightly more cautious approach to reunification issues could be discerned among the western allies (mostly France and the UK). The allies are starting to grow uneasy about the Kohl government's policy of *faits accomplis* which partially takes the form of forcing support on the western allies. Nevertheless, the

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 31/92, w. 3.*

<sup>2</sup> *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

<sup>3</sup> *Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.*

<sup>4</sup> *Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.*

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three western allies are not afraid of Germany's rising importance because of the interconnections within the EEC and NATO, which they consider durable. Opinions are being increasingly often heard about the West's lack of confidence in the success of M. Gorbachev's policy of domestic reforms. That is why it is deemed sound to keep up the rapid pace of Germany's reunification process, while highlighting the fact that we are transitioning from a bipolar system to a new one which will feature Germany in a prominent position.

In the view of the three powers, the situation in Eastern and Central Europe (the breakup of a political alliance and the economic collapse) has set the actors free from the post-war community of interests with the USSR on the German issue. These superpowers are more interested in the breakup of the next eastern alliance, i.e. the Warsaw Pact, and in Germany's entering NATO structures than in irritating its German ally. That is also connected with fears of a possible tilt in strategic balance to the east, were Germany to have a neutral state status.

Interestingly, in contrast to their governments' official positions, representatives of the three superpowers in *W[est] B[erlin]* do not hide their concerns and doubts about the implications of Germany's reunification when speaking off the record.

3. Given the view of the three western allies as well as the main political and social forces in the FRG, GDR and *W[est] B[erlin]*, the Polish diplomatic offensive has led to securing our interests with respect to the border on the Oder and Neisse rivers. Currently, though, the infrastructure of treaty relations and economic cooperation are gaining particular importance. Examples could include actions of the USSR, which was quick to open talks with Bonn in order to protect its economic interests under its existing cooperation agreements with the GDR. Our country might face a number of problems not only stemming from the monetary and economic union between the FRG and GDR, but also the associated creeping disintegration of the GDR economy. Additional difficulties will be involved in the introduction of the EEC internal market in 1992, also covering the GDR.

That is why in the "2 + 4" talks and in bilateral talks with the FRG and GDR, the Polish side could deem this element an important component of Europe's wider security and cooperation system and the foundation of a future European home. On the whole, it is a main direction supported by all the interested parties, including Germany. It could also be a factor in mitigating German economic expansion.

It is not clear yet what Germany's approach to Poland will be like in the future, especially in light of the anticipated polarization of public opinion and attitude towards the Poles. In many respects, Poland features negatively in the German issue (and its negative image has been recently perpetuated — vide the results of Polish "tourism" to the FRG, GDR, and *W[est] B[erlin]*).

The fast-paced reunification process entails specific threats to Poland, e.g. the high number of Polish visits by GDR citizens in order to register their former properties (land, homes) with the intention of seeking damages for them. The voices in the FRG that advocated a compensation adjustment between Germany and Poland have not completely gone silent, either.

- 202        Therefore, it could be concluded that the only right direction is to build pan-European structures based on the CSCE — with a US and Canadian presence in Europe. It would be appropriate to take advantage of Bonn's declared aspirations to a European community before new structures of a reunified Germany ultimately consolidate.

[dodis.ch/53322](https://dodis.ch/53322)

Turkey

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Normal

East Berlin, 13 June 1990, 12.00

For the first time in 42 years, the mayors of East Berlin and West Berlin held a joint meeting in the “Rote Rathaus (Red Municipal Building)” on Tuesday, 12 June.

East Berlin Mayor Tino Schwierzina<sup>3</sup> (SPD) and West Berlin Mayor Walter Momper<sup>4</sup> (SPD) have underlined the historical nature of the meeting and stated that they decided to meet in the same building every fortnight.

The demolition of the Berlin Wall and holding the Olympic Games in Berlin in the year 2000 were the main topics discussed at the meetings between the two mayors.

In fact, the demolition of the Berlin Wall has begun as of today (13 June). Momper announced that border controls between Berlin’s two sides will be eliminated as of 1 July 1990. The mayors declared that the unification of Berlin will be completed following the election of the joint city council and emphasized that the unified Berlin should be the capital of the new and united Germany.

As you may recall, after World War II, Berlin City Council convened for the first time on 21 May 1945 and elected engineer Dr Arthur Werner<sup>5</sup>, aged 70, as mayor.

Three years later, the joint city council was included in the British Occupation Region. Upon this, a separate municipality was established in East Berlin, which was under the occupation of the USSR, and Friedrich Ebert<sup>6</sup> was elected as the first mayor on 30 November 1948.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 58/2 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archive 3181295. Copy to the Turkish Embassy in Bonn. Reference: our communication dated 4 May 1990 and numbered 0584/446-228.

<sup>2</sup> Metin Mekik (1932–2013), [dodis.ch/P57531](https://dodis.ch/P57531), Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> Tino Schwierzina (1927–2003), [dodis.ch/P57536](https://dodis.ch/P57536), Mayor of East Berlin 30.5.1990–11.1.1991.

<sup>4</sup> Walter Momper (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57440](https://dodis.ch/P57440), Governing Mayor of West Berlin 16.2.1989–24.1.1991.

<sup>5</sup> Arthur Werner (1877–1967), [dodis.ch/P57537](https://dodis.ch/P57537), Mayor of Berlin 17.5.1945–5.12.1946.

<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Ebert Jr. (1894–1979), [dodis.ch/P57539](https://dodis.ch/P57539), Mayor of East Berlin 1948–1967.

[dodis.ch/53323](https://dodis.ch/53323)

Turkey

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Normal

East Berlin, 18 June 1990, 5.00 p.m.

During the private session held on 17 June 1990 by GDR People's Chamber, the coalition partner DSU submitted a draft providing the annexation of the GDR into the territory of FRG under article 23 of the Basic Law of the FRG. This vital submission, which is described as the end of the GDR, has been put on the agenda by a two-thirds majority.

With regards to that development, it has been stated that if the draft is adopted, the GDR Council of Ministers will be repealed because the Basic Law recognizes only one council. Furthermore, it has been stated that President de Maizièrè<sup>3</sup> will have to lay down his office on the same day and this office will be taken over by Chancellor Kohl<sup>4</sup>.

While advising to be calm and cautious, President de Maizièrè has explained that he also supports an early annexation. However, it was pointed out that a second unification treaty including the general conditions should be made beforehand. Moreover, the need for federal states to also be established in the GDR before the annexation has been underlined.

It has been asserted that in case of the adoption of GDR's draft, this will be a "fait accompli" and 2+4 meetings will no longer be needed. SPD Parliamentary Leader Richard Schröder<sup>5</sup> argued that political union should be made through agreement with the "super powers". CDU/DA Chief Negotiator of the Financial, Economic and Social Unification Treaty Günther Krause<sup>6</sup> noted that the annexation should be carried out in the summer and the annexation procedure will be determined by the second unification treaty.

According to Krause, this second unification treaty will enter into force following the election which will be held for the whole of Germany on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 82/9 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archives 3180745. Copies to the Turkish Embassies in Washington, Moscow, Bonn, London and Paris and the Turkish Missions to NATO in Brussels, to EC in Brussels and to the CFE Talks in Vienna.

<sup>2</sup> Metin Mekik (1932–2013), [dodis.ch/P57531](https://dodis.ch/P57531), Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> Lothar de Maizièrè (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4–2.10.1990.

<sup>4</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Schröder (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57559](https://dodis.ch/P57559), Member of the People's Chamber 5.4.1990–2.10.1990 and SPD Parliamentary Leader 3.4.–21.8.1990.

<sup>6</sup> Günther Krause (\*1953), [dodis.ch/P57560](https://dodis.ch/P57560), GDR chief negotiator and signatory of the German Reunification Treaty.

205 of December in 1990. Before that, GDR federal state elections will be held on 23 September 1990.

The draft has been referred to the Constitutional Committee and the Inter-German Committee by a two-thirds majority.



[dodis.ch/53324](https://dodis.ch/53324)

Turkey

*Political report<sup>1</sup> of the Turkish Consul General in Berlin, Akın Emregül<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

MEETINGS OF THE SENATE OF WEST BERLIN AND THE GOVERNMENT  
OF EAST BERLIN

Berlin, June 1990

1) The Senate of West Berlin and the Government of East Berlin (Magistrat) gathered in the City Hall (Rotes Rathaus) of East Berlin for the first time in 42 years. Some of the decisions taken are as follows in summary:

- Berlin will be the capital of the united Germany. Every kind of effort will be made in this regard.
- Both administrations of the city will continue to make joint efforts in order to rapidly finalize issues such as the rehabilitation of Berlin, transportation, telecommunication, housing and other issues and will redouble these efforts.
- Berlin should be a state with the insertion of Brandenburg.
- A determined effort will be made in order to host the Olympic Games in 2000 or 2004.
- A close cooperation will be established with European capitals, particularly with Moscow, Paris and Warsaw so that the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe shall set up a headquarter in Berlin and that a bridge of friendship and cooperation shall be laid among European cities.
- Common measures will be developed in order to ensure the peace of the city and to prevent violence.
- A common effort will be made to create a tolerant attitude towards minorities and pursue an approach which is compatible with the multicultural lifestyle of the city and which protects the social rights of the people of Berlin.
- Joint meetings will continue to be held in the City Hall of East Berlin on Tuesdays every 15 days.
- A personnel exchange program will be implemented at the administrative level between the governments of the two states.

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<sup>1</sup> *Political report No. 367/D.401 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archives 3180235. Internal distribution within the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the Turkish Embassy in Bonn.*

<sup>2</sup> *Akın Emregül (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57551](https://dodis.ch/P57551), Turkish Consul General in Berlin 30.4.1988–1.7.1992.*

[dodis.ch/53325](https://dodis.ch/53325)

Turkey

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin, Metin Mekik<sup>2</sup>, to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Normal

East Berlin, 28 June 1990, 3.30 p.m.

Matthias Gehler<sup>3</sup> the Government Spokesman of the German Democratic Republic, by issuing a statement to the press following the meeting held yesterday by the Government of the Democratic German Republic stated that the Government would not make any explanation (negative) concerning the all-Germany election dates.

In accordance with the relevant news issued on the ADN Bulletin, Gehler stated that the government of the Federal Republic of Germany aspired to hold the elections this year in December; however, if the reunification process progresses too rapidly, the psychological state of the people of the Democratic German Republic should be taken into consideration; the transition to a market economy is a new application that has created fear among the people. The economic, monetary and social union of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany would be formed on 1<sup>st</sup> of July, and he reaffirmed that the internal border controls would be removed between the two countries.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 131 (copy, translated from Turkish): Turkish Diplomatic Archives 3178470.

Ref: Telegram No.isda-isba/751 non-confidential telegram.

<sup>2</sup> Metin Mekik (1932–2013), [dodis.ch/P57531](https://dodis.ch/P57531), Turkish Ambassador in East Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> Matthias Gehler (\*1954), [dodis.ch/P57563](https://dodis.ch/P57563), Spokesman of the GDR Government 12.4.1990–2.10.1990.

[dodis.ch/52961](https://dodis.ch/52961)

Netherlands

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin, Egbert Jacobs<sup>2</sup>,  
to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek<sup>3</sup>*

#### GDR IN FINAL PHASE

Confidential

East Berlin, 4 July 1990

If one could still think initially that a breather would be inserted after 1 July to recover, it has now become clear that the GDR population sees no reason to prolong the continued existence of this state. The successful course of the introduction of the D-mark has brought more confidence in the future. Rarely is anything heard any more about the “insertion of own values/achievements” or about “proceeding on an equal footing together”. Protests about “selling out to the FRG” have fallen silent.

In this mood it has become impossible to pursue non party politics and GDR parties, with the exception of the PDS, have become reconciled to their insignificance. Hence the ever-advancing dates on which they will “join” the FRG parties. Of course parties without an equivalent in the FRG naturally feel threatened as regards their continued existence. Meanwhile, the farmer’s party DBP, having emerged as a relative winner in the municipal elections of 6 May, has affiliated itself with the CDU. The original “Aufbruch” party DA of Minister Eppelmann<sup>4</sup> is expected to follow this example soon. The DSU is unable to merge with the CSU for political reasons emanating from Bonn and Munich and will go under due to internal division, fueled by reproaches about the cooperation of its recent leadership with FRG representatives. Right-wing Germany is clearly gathering in the DSU, and because both DSU Ministers (Ebeling<sup>5</sup>/Development Cooperation and Diestel<sup>6</sup>/Internal Affairs) have left their party without returning their portfolio, the DSU is no longer represented in the government.

Today the Minister of Justice has also left his (liberal) party “because of excessive influence of West German FDP”. Read: because of too much criticism from

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 145 (incoming translated from Dutch): Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs BuZa 1985–1990, blok Z-299, [NA 2.05.392] inv.nr. 4601[2129].

<sup>2</sup> Egbert Jacobs (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57545](https://dodis.ch/P57545), Dutch Ambassador in East Berlin 1989–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Rainer Eppelmann (\*1943), [dodis.ch/P57572](https://dodis.ch/P57572), Member of the People’s Chamber of the GDR and Minister for National Defense 12.4.1990–3.10.1990.

<sup>5</sup> Hans-Wilhelm Ebeling (\*1934), [dodis.ch/P57573](https://dodis.ch/P57573), Minister for Economic Cooperation of the GDR 12.4.1990–3.10.1990.

<sup>6</sup> Peter-Michael Diestel (\*1952), [dodis.ch/P57574](https://dodis.ch/P57574), Interior Minister of the GDR 12.4.1990–3.10.1990.

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the West German liberal side on the past of Minister Wünsche<sup>7</sup>. That Prime Minister De Maiziere<sup>8</sup> keeps these three – now non-aligned – gentlemen indicates, in my opinion, that he has faith in Diestel and Wünsche as competent administrators who are to remain until December. Both in legislative adjustment and in dismantling the STASI, party-political fiddling is inconvenient. Nonetheless the term “government crisis” has already been used, but has not led to visible political excitement, a sign of waning interest in the ups and downs of the government that is already seen as an extension of Bonn.

Of the 3 conditions for joint elections at the beginning of December that have been brought forward by the GDR coalition – the “Unification Treaty”<sup>9</sup>, the establishment of “Länder”, and the termination of the 2 + 4 consultations<sup>10</sup> – only the latter appears to constitute a potential problem. However, the GDR (population) has little to do with this: in this country the issue arouses hardly any interest and every result appears acceptable as long as it does not delay unification and, secondly, brings an end to foreign patronage. If the USSR continues to make trouble, this will certainly work against Moscow. The special GDR-USSR connection has long been chopped off mentally by the population. Which does not mean that “die Wirtschaft”<sup>11</sup> has lost its interest in the markets in the east. On the contrary, but almost exclusively as a sales market.

<sup>7</sup> Kurt Wünsche (\*1929), [dodis.ch/P57575](https://dodis.ch/P57575), Justice Minister of the GDR 11.1.1990–16.8.1990.

<sup>8</sup> Lothar de Maizière (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4–2.10.1990.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in German: Einigungsvertrag.

<sup>10</sup> Series of meetings of the four Allied Powers (USA, Britain, France, USSR) and FRG plus GDR.

<sup>11</sup> The economy, here West-German entrepreneurship.

[dodis.ch/52947](https://dodis.ch/52947)

Israel

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> from the Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe, Yosef Govrin<sup>2</sup>, to the Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Reuven Merhav<sup>3</sup>*

ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ISRAEL-GDR? BASIS FOR A DISCUSSION HEADED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAVID LEVY<sup>4</sup>

Jerusalem, 10 July 1990

According to the summing up of our talks with the GDR delegation in Copenhagen on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of this month<sup>5</sup> and the telegrams from our Ambassador in Bonn of the 4<sup>th</sup><sup>6</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> of this month we can conclude:

1. The fate of our material claims from the GDR is in the hands of the FRG, in view of the monetary union of the two Germanies (which came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of this month) and the expected political union between them towards the end of this year.

2. The GDR delegation refuses to mention the "Luxembourg Agreements" of 1952 (in the joint announcement on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the GDR) as the basis for talks between experts from both countries to discuss the material claims of the Israeli government from the GDR government. This refusal was apparently coordinated in advance with the authorities in the FRG who are balking at the financial implications involved.

3. In negotiations with the FRG it will be possible to reach agreement on the payment of certain sums, so long as they are not called "reparations". We can also conclude that we are talking about much smaller sums than would be expected according to the "Luxembourg agreements". (As we know, there is no explicit ref-

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum (copy, translated from Hebrew): Israel State Archives P 4731/2. Copies to David Levy, [dodis.ch/P57527](https://dodis.ch/P57527), Benjamin Netanyahu, [dodis.ch/P57443](https://dodis.ch/P57443), Arye Levin, [dodis.ch/P57528](https://dodis.ch/P57528), Robbie Sabel, [dodis.ch/P57529](https://dodis.ch/P57529), Michael Shiloh, [dodis.ch/P57526](https://dodis.ch/P57526), Moshe Melamed, [dodis.ch/P57515](https://dodis.ch/P57515) and Joel Alon, [dodis.ch/P48643](https://dodis.ch/P48643). Attached: A summary of our talks in Copenhagen, the telegrams from our ambassador in Bonn of the [4<sup>th</sup>] and 6<sup>th</sup> of this month.

<sup>2</sup> Yosef Govrin (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57509](https://dodis.ch/P57509), Assistant Director-General for Eastern Europe in the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Reuven Merhav (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57513](https://dodis.ch/P57513), Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1989–1991.

<sup>4</sup> David Levy (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57527](https://dodis.ch/P57527), Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel 11.6.1990–13.7.1992.

<sup>5</sup> The Israeli Embassy in Copenhagen to the Director-General of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3 July 1990, Israel State Archives P4731/2

<sup>6</sup> Benjamin Navon (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57507](https://dodis.ch/P57507), Israeli Ambassador in Bonn, to Reuven Merhav, 4 July 1990, Israel State Archives P4731/2. The telegram of 6 July 1990 is not in the file.

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erence to the GDR in the agreements, only implied, to commit itself to pay a third of the reparations while the FRG took on itself to pay two-thirds).

4. The person who can decide in favour of reparations is apparently Chancellor Kohl<sup>7</sup>. It is proposed to initiate with him a meeting on the level of the finance ministers or alternatively, to send him a letter signed by Prime Minister Shamir<sup>8</sup>. A meeting cannot take place before the middle of August. A letter can be given to him immediately.

Preliminary feelers have been sent out by our Ambassador in Bonn who has suggested to us stages for action. At the same time it is proposed that you should meet with your colleague in the FRG Foreign Ministry<sup>9</sup>, in continuation of the consultations that you already had, on this subject, on 26 May of this year.

#### *The questions before us*

##### *1. Is the FRG interested in our establishing diplomatic relations with the GDR?*

The assumption is that the answer is positive, since it will be a form of giving a stamp of approval to the reunification. Their agreement to the establishment [of relations] was received by Foreign Minister Arens<sup>10</sup> in his meetings with the FRG leaders in Bonn (before the elections in the GDR) and our Ambassador in Bonn received a hint confirming this from the minister of state in Kohl's office who said "that he would prefer that the FRG embassy in Israel should also represent the GDR."

2. *Is it politically wise to establish relations with a state that will be swallowed up by the FRG in a few months' time* while it flatly refuses to bear its part in paying reparations to Israel (as defined as fulfilling its part in the absorption of Holocaust survivors from Germany and other countries under Nazi occupation during WWII)? As we know, the East German delegation proposed including a paragraph in the joint declaration on the establishment of relations saying: that Israel and the GDR have decided to hold a meeting of their experts to discuss material contributions. If we insist it will say "Israel's material demands from the GDR connected with victims of the Holocaust, no later than 30 days after the date of signature on the establishment of relations."

#### *The advantages of establishing relations*

– An achievement for Israeli foreign policy towards the PLO and the Arab states which have enjoyed the political and military support of the GDR for nearly 40 years. Now that state is turning against them by establishing relations with Israel and by publicly and definitively disassociating itself from the UN resolution which condemned Zionism and by condemning terrorism.

– Setting up a framework for negotiations on reparations which creates a dynamic, which in itself will continue afterwards in negotiations with the FRG. (It should be remembered that the West German chancellor has declared that he will

<sup>7</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>8</sup> Yitzhak Shamir (1915–2012), [dodis.ch/P54271](https://dodis.ch/P54271), Prime Minister of Israel 20.10.1986–13.7.1992.

<sup>9</sup> Jürgen Sudhoff (\*1935), [dodis.ch/P57384](https://dodis.ch/P57384), Secretary of State in the Foreign Ministry of the FRG 22.4.1987–17.1.1991.

<sup>10</sup> Moshe Arens (1925–2019), [dodis.ch/P57439](https://dodis.ch/P57439), Israeli Foreign Minister 22.12.1988–11.6.1990.

212 honour all the financial commitments of the GDR after the reunification of both the Germanies).

*The disadvantages of establishing relations*

- Giving a “stamp of approval” to the GDR towards their political union with the FRG, without paying its share of the “reparations” as we would expect in accordance with the “Luxembourg Agreements”.

- Accepting the text proposed by the GDR delegation, after they have told us that it has no intention of basing the negotiations on the “Luxembourg Agreements”, could be interpreted as agreement on our part to the GDR’s refusal to bind the FRG to negotiate with us on the basis of those agreements.

- It is not worthwhile, from a practical point of view, to establish relations with a state that will not exist in a few months, since in any case we are not talking about setting up diplomatic representations.

*To sum up*, the question is purely political. Negotiations on the reparations (proportion, amount, framework) will in any case be held with the FRG.

If we decide in favour of establishing relations, we should act to carry this out as soon as the attitude of the FRG becomes clear (from the director-general of the MFA in Bonn) or from Chancellor Kohl. Since a meeting with him could only take place over a month from now, it is preferable to send him a letter, and the reply to it may be received earlier.

[dodis.ch/52930](https://dodis.ch/52930)

Austria

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

GERMAN UNITY; STATE OF AFFAIRS IN MID-JULY 1990

Vienna, 18 July 1990

### *I. Inner-German Aspects*

The Economic, Monetary and Social union of the two German states entered into effect on 1 July 1990. The most essential measure was the introduction of the Deutschmark in the GDR. An agreement on the legal and constitutional unification of the two parts of Germany is in preparation and should be signed by the autumn of this year.

### *All-German Elections*

The next Bundestag election was scheduled for 2 December 1990. In its place, all-Germany elections should now take place on that day. The mode of election is still at issue. The GDR-CDU advocates for carrying out voting separately in the FRG and the GDR (electoral threshold 5%) and the accession of the GDR to the Bonn Basic Law only afterwards. The SPD and FDP in both parts of the country are for a unitary election in all of Germany (electoral threshold for the whole territory 5%) and the accession of the GDR before the election. (This proposal i. a. would mean that the PDS, the successor party to the SED in the GDR, may fail to reach the 5% threshold in unified Germany.) The West German CDU is divided on the issue.

### *II. External Aspects*

Upon the occasion of the recent visit of Chancellor Kohl<sup>2</sup> to Moscow, President Gorbachev<sup>3</sup> gave a de facto green light to German unity. The agreement achieved includes the following main points:

<sup>1</sup> Memo (translated from German): Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1990, GZ. 22.17.01/173-II.1/90. Written by Marius Calligaris, [dodis.ch/P57521](https://dodis.ch/P57521) and signed by Johann Plattner, [dodis.ch/P57520](https://dodis.ch/P57520); also published in Wilson Center, doc. 165725. Distributed to the Federal Minister, the General Secretary, the section heads, all departments of the Political Section, and the Austrian diplomatic representations in member states of the CSCE. The information was also part of the preparation file for Franz Vranitzky on the occasion of the visit by Lothar de Maizière to Austria scheduled for 25 and 26 July 1990. See ÖStA Arbeitsbesuch von MP Lothar de Maizière 25./26. Juli 1990, Kreisky Archives, Depositum Franz Vranitzky, AP, box BM Choonhavan Chatichai (Thailand), MP Calfa CSFR 1990 PM Silva (Portugal), MP Singh (Indien), Pres. Dubcek (CSFR), PM Kang Young-Hoon (Korea), PM Bhutto (Pakistan), Pres. George Vassiliou (Zypern), MP Maiziere Lothar (DDR) 25.7.90).

<sup>2</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>3</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.



- Unified Germany consists of the FRG, GDR and Berlin
- Full sovereignty of Germany, after unification
- Soviet consent to NATO membership of unified Germany
- Soviet troop withdrawal from the territory of the GDR in 3–4 years (a treaty will be concluded on this)
- During which time no extension of NATO structures on GDR territory, however, validity of the NATO alliance obligation for it (commitment from Kohl that, also later, there will be no non-German troops east of the Elbe)
- Western Allies military presence in Berlin until completion of the Soviet troop withdrawal
- Reduction of total German forces to 370,000 (Compromise Genscher<sup>4</sup>-Stoltenberg<sup>5</sup>)
- Renunciation of ABC weapons by unified Germany

Gorbachev expressly pointed out that his change of attitude on the issue of German NATO membership was made possible by the Moscow-positive result of the recent summit of the Alliance in London.

Chancellor Kohl has furthermore assured massive economic aid to the Soviet Union and promised also to advocate for such assistance from other Western states.

By summer of 1991 a German-Soviet agreement is to be completed, which according to Chancellor Kohl will contain co-operation in various fields and regular political consultations.

Reactions to the German-Soviet agreement are unanimously positive worldwide (the case of Ridley<sup>6</sup> in Great Britain shows however the existence of subliminal reservations in individual Western European countries towards the weight of the future unified Germany).

Given the agreement reached in Moscow, the “2+4” talks in Paris on 17 July went without controversy. The foreign ministers decided to work out a declaration on Germany, in which the external aspects of German unity should be regulated. The declaration will be discussed at the next “2+4” round on 12 September in Moscow.

#### *Polish Western Border*

At the recent “2+4” talks, where the Polish Foreign Minister<sup>7</sup> also participated, the question of the Polish western border was at center (the Bonn Bundestag and the GDR People’s Chamber on 21 June adopted a statement on the inviolability of the Oder-Neisse line and a border treaty to be concluded between Germany and Poland). At this point Poland dropped its final demand, whereby the full sovereignty of Germany should only be restored after ratification of this border treaty. Agreement has now been reached that the treaty will be signed in the shortest

<sup>4</sup> Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Stoltenberg (1928–2001), [dodis.ch/P46108](https://dodis.ch/P46108), Defence Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–1.4.1992.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Ridley (1929–1993), [dodis.ch/P48293](https://dodis.ch/P48293), British Secretary of State for Trade and Industry 24.7.1989–13.7.1990.

<sup>7</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

- 215 possible time after the realization of German unity and submitted to the parliament of unified Germany for ratification. (The FRG has promised Poland economic aid too.)

### *III. Assessment*

It can now be expected that the unification of the two German states will become reality before the end of the year.

Through the agreements in Moscow and Paris, respectively, the following has been achieved:

The FRG: the realization of German unity

The West: NATO membership of unified Germany

The USSR: satisfying its security interests (German troop strength, German renunciation of ABC weapons, first steps to change NATO as a condition for the reached agreement, beyond this the bargaining chip of a troop presence east of the Elbe for 3–4 years) and economic assistance by the FRG or the West.

From a pan-European perspective, the agreement paves the way for a rapid continuation of military negotiations in Vienna and for the objective of setting up a new political architecture in Europe.

For Austria, a point of interest will be i. a. how much impact the efforts of the Western European states to firmly “bind Germany to the West” will have on the development of the EC (deepening, European Union!).

[dodis.ch/52932](https://dodis.ch/52932)

Austria

*Memo<sup>1</sup> by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

GERMAN UNITY, SOVIET POSITION

Vienna, 19 July 1990

In addition to the information of Dep[artment] II.1. (GZ. 22.17.01/173)<sup>2</sup> the following should be noted regarding the current Soviet position on the German question:

1) The concessions made by President Gorbachev<sup>3</sup> to Chancellor Kohl<sup>4</sup> on 16 July go far beyond the expectations of those who ultimately considered Soviet consent to the NATO solution for a unified Germany under the prerequisite of a special solution for "East Elbia"<sup>5</sup> possible. The solution agreed to by Kohl and Gorbachev in the Caucasus provides for the future, that is the period after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, to a limited extent only, a special military status for the territory of the present GDR, cf. the not entirely clear commitment of Kohl that no foreign troops will be stationed in this area. In contrast, all other areas of Germany as a whole will engage in a complete security policy integration. (The last three issues of the prestigious American magazine "Foreign Affairs" include a series of articles from known American specialist authors – Kirkpatrick<sup>6</sup>, Mc Bundy<sup>7</sup>, etc. – who all indicated that they did not expect a consensual NATO solution.) It therefore

1 *Memo (translated from German): Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1990, GZ. 22.17.01/176-II.3/90. Written and signed by Ernst Sucharipa, [dodis.ch/P57511](https://dodis.ch/P57511); also published in Wilson Center, doc. [165726](https://dodis.ch/165726). Distributed to the Federal Minister, the General Secretary, the section heads, all departments of the Political Section, and the Austrian diplomatic representations in member states of the CSCE. The information was also part of the preparatory file for Franz Vranitzky on the occasion of the visit by Lothar de Maizière to Austria scheduled for 25 and 26 July 1990. See ÖStA Arbeitsbesuch von MP Lothar de Maizière 25./26. Juli 1990, Kreisky Archives, Depositum Franz Vranitzky, AP, box BM Choonhavan Chatichai (Thailand), MP Calfa CSFR 1990 PM Silva (Portugal), MP Singh (Indien), Pres. Dubcek (CSFR), PM Kang Young-Hoon (Korea), PM Bhutto (Pakistan), Pres. George Vassiliou (Zypern), MP Maiziere Lothar (DDR) 25.7.90).*

2 *Document 56, [dodis.ch/52930](https://dodis.ch/52930).*

3 *Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.*

4 *Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.*

5 *A term subsuming all former Prussian territories East of the Elbe.*

6 *Jeane Kirkpatrick (1926–2006), [dodis.ch/P47062](https://dodis.ch/P47062), Political Scientist.*

7 *McGeorge Bundy (1919–1996), [dodis.ch/P37402](https://dodis.ch/P37402), Political Scientist at the Carnegie Corporation 1990–1996.*

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seems legitimate to question the reasons why the attitude of the Soviet Union, or – more accurately – Gorbachev, went beyond all positive expectations:

2) The position taken by Gorbachev can on the one hand be explained as the result of a combination of newly confirmed domestic policy strengths of the Soviet President having “won” his party congress, and on the other hand the recognition of foreign policy weaknesses in his country: Fully aware that the confirmation of his (currently) unchallengeable role had increased his foreign policy scope, Gorbachev – apparently without further coordination with other still relevant forces (military, etc.) – and perhaps at the last possible moment successfully attempted to gain as much capital (figuratively as well as in the true sense of the word) as possible out of the Soviet withdrawal from East Germany and the renunciation of older positions of the Soviet Union’s policy on Germany (insisting on the neutrality of a unified Germany).

3) Gorbachev secured at least the following advantages for his country:

- The reduction of the total German force level to 370,000 men and thus (including the manning level of the NVA) an overall drop of 45%;
- The obvious assumption by unified Germany of the – substantial – costs of Soviet troop withdrawal (see letter of intent concerning agreement on effects of DM-conversion);
- Further active efforts by the FRG to gain Western aid for the Soviet Union;
- Commitment to complete a bilateral comprehensive treaty (probably political consultations and economic assistance);

4) The agreement between Kohl-Gorbachev has been completed without informing the Western partners in advance, thus also signaling a future autonomy of German foreign policy.

5) President Gorbachev could speculate with the idea that after a Soviet troop withdrawal the negative sentiment towards foreign military presence could generally grow further in the FRG and thus perhaps a traditional goal of Soviet policy could still be achieved in the longer term.

6) In total, the agreements of 16 July are – as Gorbachev himself says – a matter of successful “Realpolitik.” Whether the Soviet President will succeed to domestically secure this result, will also depend on the further reaction in the West: too loud a triumph may be harmful, but on the other hand, in light of the Germans “going it alone” (see above) it is not to be expected.

[dodis.ch/52941](https://dodis.ch/52941)

Canada

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Canadian Ambassador in Bonn, Thomas W. Delworth<sup>2</sup>, to the Canadian Department of External Affairs*

GERMANY: THE SUMMER OF 1990

Confidential

Bonn, 23 July 1990

Summary: an unbelievable summer continues to contribute to an improbable year. Last week's Soviet concession that united German membership in NATO was now acceptable and the Two-Plus-Four agreement in Paris on Polish western borders have effectively removed the final international barriers to German reunification. The devil, to adapt an old German adage, may reside in the remaining details, but at the moment at least there is confidence on all sides that they will be overcome, and on schedule. It is, however, already clear that the impact on Europe of its reunited centre will be profound. Still to be gauged is the precise nature of this impact. The presence of a united Germany – and the momentous change that gave rise to it – will affect virtually all aspects of the way in which Canada and Canadians have thought not only about Europe but also about the transatlantic relationship. A reunited Germany could well necessitate the readjustment of some of the fundamental assumptions in Canadian foreign policy, including our views of the role of the alliance, and our place in East/West relations.

2. Report: in retrospect it is clear that Soviet intentions behind the chain of events that led to the breach of the Wall on 9 November 1989 were foreshadowed in the joint Soviet/FRG declaration of 13 June of that year. In it, Gorbachev endorsed the principle of national self-determination, thus effectively burying the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty and of the irreversibility of Communism. At the time, German officials who had worked on the declaration were jubilant, but few others took its implications to heart. By November, the SED ideologist, Otto Reinhold<sup>3</sup>, was saying on West German television that a GDR without socialism would lose its legitimacy. The end of Honecker<sup>4</sup> by the turn of the year, and the

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. ZQGR1429 (incoming): Global Affairs Canada file 25-3-3-5-Germany / Confidential. Ref: Tel. ZQGR1224 16 Jul 90. Info to Moscow, Washington, London, Paris, Paris-OECD, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Rome, Hague, Oslo, Brussels-EEC, Brussels-NATO, Military Representation to NATO, Vienna, Delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Warsaw, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Permanent Mission New York, Geneva, Prague, Privy Council Office, Office of the Prime Minister, Department of Finance, National Defence Headquarters.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas W. Delworth (1929–2012), [dodis.ch/P51338](https://dodis.ch/P51338), Canadian Ambassador in Bonn 1987–1992.

<sup>3</sup> Otto Reinhold (1925–2016), [dodis.ch/P57476](https://dodis.ch/P57476), Member and ideologist of the SED.

<sup>4</sup> Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

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reduction of the SED in the spring elections to a splinter party proved his point: the GDR had voted to abolish itself. What happened between then and now looks like the working out of some sort of inexorable logic of history, but there was also virtually unbelievable German good luck, combined with political courage and determination not only on Gorbachev's<sup>5</sup> part but also by East Europeans. Among the latter were members of the then Hungarian government who in the autumn of 1989 took the brave decision to break their treaty commitments with their East German partners by permitting GDR refugees in Hungary to flow west, knowing full well that such a decision was crossing a Communist Rubicon, and would create a crisis within the Eastern Bloc from which recovery was unlikely.

3. So greatly have times changed at this point that Chancellor Kohl<sup>6</sup> went to Moscow last week, returning with Soviet agreement on a united Germany in NATO. This agreement is more striking because it was reached independent of any visible, direct relationship to the Two-Plus-Four process, and removed in detail from anything but the broadest NATO imprimatur (so far as we know there was no prior NATO consultation on the reduction of German troop levels offered by Kohl, or on the agreement that the 380,000 Soviet troops leave Germany no later than 1994). A strong USA profile in this deal was, moreover, noticeable by its absence: the Bush<sup>7</sup> administration had already accepted that Germany would go its own way on economic support to the East, whatever decisions were or were not taken at the Houston Summit. This laissez-faire approach on the mechanics of German unification seems generally shared by other allies, the Ridley<sup>8</sup> affair notwithstanding.

4. This is a great Western victory: removing the Iron Curtain from Central Europe and opening the way to the final achievement of the goals we set for ourselves at the beginning of the CSCE process in the 1970s, this is the much-to-be-welcomed culmination of a remarkable team effort, despite occasional doubts, hiccups and false starts. According to Foreign Minister Shevardnadze<sup>9</sup>, the London NATO Summit, in transforming the purpose of the alliance, prepared the way for Soviet agreement on a united Germany in NATO. On 19 November, everything will culminate at the Paris CSCE meeting when German union will be recognized (presumably in a declaration) by all participating states and where new security structures under CSCE auspices will be established at the same time as CFE I concludes and the final agreement on the elimination of Four Power rights in Germany is reached. A breathtaking agenda for a single relatively brief meeting.

5 Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

6 Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

7 George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–2018), [dodis.ch/P47406](https://dodis.ch/P47406), President of the United States, 20.1.1989–20.1.1993.

8 Nicholas Ridley (1929–1993), [dodis.ch/P48293](https://dodis.ch/P48293), British Minister of Trade and Industry 24.7.1989–13.7.1990.

9 Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

5. The original deal at Potsdam looking to a democratic Europe is thus being implemented after a delay of some 40 years. German reunification and its concomitant twin, the revolution in Eastern Europe, have drastically changed what the Russians used to call the correlation of forces in Central Europe. With German union, the Western European political and economic equilibrium at least symbolically shifts its centre of gravity away from the Rhine towards the Elbe. Despite various studies that we and our allies have undertaken, the shape of such a transformed Europe is barely visible; many studies have focussed on the processes of German union, implications for NATO etc., but few on the facts, as rearranged, following union. These latter are virtually upon us. First among them is that the West German identity assumed by the FRG which virtually everyone has taken as a given, will perforce begin its disappearance the day a united Germany is proclaimed. A reunited Germany will be much greater than the sum of its parts, the FRG plus the GDR plus Berlin. But what in fact will it be?

6. The Federal German Republic had already emerged as the Western European *primus inter pares*, and with *de facto* Soviet withdrawal in the East, a united Germany will become the predominant power in an area which Germans (and their Austrian cousins) have historically contested with the Russians. Here, the paradox is that as the FRG emerged as the dominant economic power in Europe it remained only a quasi-sovereign country, militarily limited in many respects by the terms of various NATO agreements, and by a kind of political self-censorship in its dealings with both East and West, particularly on security issues. With the imminent emergence of a fully sovereign, united Germany (with of course, one or two transitional arrangements) this era is virtually at an end.

7. Obviously, the effects of German union on the allied military presence in the FRG will be direct and immediate, with long-term implications for force levels and structures. As Soviet withdrawals in the East continue, a vacuum could well be created, generating a host of other security problems which CSCE mechanisms now under negotiation are designed to address: in theory, the old East/West security structures will be replaced by an institutional role for the CSCE, inter- and intra-alliance cooperation and non-aggression treaties with the USSR and Poland. This may well be a promising beginning but it is unlikely to be the end of the story. Whatever role CSCE mechanisms may eventually play, the reassertion of German economic power and political influence in Eastern Europe is a process already begun. Unification will intensify this process as Germany becomes *primus inter pares* in Central Europe as well. The Maoist dictum that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun has been disproved by German bankers, and mere possession of nuclear weapons by the UK and France as a means for wielding political influence has proven no match for the Deutsche Mark.

8. Chancellor Kohl has sought to play down the significance of the profound changes now underway, speaking of a united Germany as the "rational centre of Europe" and of the German ability to act as a clearing house of ideas between Western and Eastern Europe. For some time yet, a united Germany will indeed be preoccupied with internal matters. There are dislocations in the GDR created by the onset of capitalism – its aggressive West German variety has so far been underplayed by the FRG coalition, but already the effects on GDR agriculture and

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industry have been profound. The complexity of the issues involved in the new Germany's European vocation are miniaturized in the debate over whether the capital of a united Germany should be Berlin. De Maizière<sup>10</sup> has unwisely made this a pre-condition for union, and President von Weizsäcker<sup>11</sup> (for unknown reasons) has also entered an intensely political debate on the side of Berlin. There is thus revealed a second debate about whether Germany should now turn to the East as much as it had turned to the West. With big metropolitan Berlin – a major European city by any standards – the vision of an Eastern empire comes virtually to mind. For many Germans, to opt for Berlin is to opt for an eastern “empire”, an eastern economic hinterland. This is feared as much by many Germans as it is by others.

9. In the rush of events over German unification and the transformation of Eastern Europe, one overarching fact is occasionally missed. The strongest military power in Europe remains the Soviet Union, and in many respects, and in ways still difficult to measure, the Soviet Union retains its full potential as arbiter of events in Central Europe, perhaps now less in conjunction with its transatlantic superpower partner and more with the new Germany: the determination of events in Europe is now more firmly in the hands of Europeans in ways not thought possible only a few months ago.

10. Even as German preoccupations over completing the integration of its eastern with its western parts will continue, post-unification, it is certain that German reticence internationally will disappear. Of necessity and inevitability, there will be pressure for the building of a truly global German foreign policy beyond the range of relatively narrowly-focused matters as now practised by the FRG. The effects of the emergence of this Central European superpower on our present transatlantic relationship with the FRG is as yet discernable in only the vaguest outline. As Germany unites, grows together and begins to flex its new muscles many of the assumptions Canada has so long held vis-à-vis the FRG will need the closest re-examination if we are to maximize the strengths we can draw from relationships with a transformed Europe.

<sup>10</sup> Lothar de Maizière (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4–2.10.1990.

<sup>11</sup> Richard von Weizsäcker (1920–2015), [dodis.ch/P5944](https://dodis.ch/P5944), President of the FRG 1.7.1984–30.6.1994.



[dodis.ch/53319](https://dodis.ch/53319)

Soviet Union

*Memo<sup>1</sup> for the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Eduard Shevardnadze<sup>2</sup>*

Moscow, 6 August 1990

This is the draft of the “Final International Legal Settlement with Germany”, prepared in the light of agreements reached in Arkhyz.

As it was agreed at the experts’ meeting of the “Six” held 19 July in Bonn (after the ministerial meeting in Paris), the Western participants and the Soviet side must exchange their drafts of the final document before 15 August in order to facilitate the work of the experts when they come to Berlin at the beginning of September to agree the final text of the said document.

It would be advisable to hand our project to the rest of the “Six” participants as soon as possible, at any rate before the arrival of Kastrup<sup>3</sup> (August 13) and especially Genscher<sup>4</sup> (August 17) in Moscow. In this case, we may know the reaction of West Germany to the Soviet draft even before experts start working in Berlin and give it due consideration.

If there are no other instructions or comments from your side, we will pass the proposed draft to the embassies of the FRG, GDR and the three Western powers in Moscow (with adequate translations into foreign languages).

Please approve.

*Draft*

*Final International legal settlement with Germany*

Preamble

The Governments of the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic,

– realizing that the peoples of their states have been living in peace with each other since 1945;

– taking into account the historical changes of recent time in Europe, which provide an opportunity to overcome its division;

<sup>1</sup> *Memo (translated from Russian):* Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation ABII PΦ, ф. 757, оп. 35, л. 196, д. 9, л. 151–161.

<sup>2</sup> *Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014)*, [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union* 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

<sup>3</sup> *Dieter Kastrup (\*1937)*, [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383), *Political Director in the FRG Foreign Ministry, 1988–1991*.

<sup>4</sup> *Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016)*, [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), *Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG* 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

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- taking into account the rights and responsibilities of the Four powers relating to Germany as a whole and to Berlin, as well as respective agreements and decisions of the Four powers taken during war and the post-war period;
- determined, in accordance with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, to develop friendly relations among nations on the basis of respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;
- referring to the principles and provisions of the CSCE Helsinki Final Act;
- recognizing that these principles have laid a solid foundation for the establishment of a just and to secure a peaceful arrangement in Europe;
- determined to take into consideration the security interests of all concerned;
- convinced of the need to finally overcome antagonism and develop cooperation in Europe;
- reaffirming its readiness to take effective measures for the purpose of further disarmament, transformation of existing military and political alliances, establishment relations of trust and partnership between them, institutionalization of the CSCE process, including the establishment of all-European security frameworks;
- noting that the German people, freely exercising their right of self-determination, have expressed their will towards building the state unity of Germany in order to serve the cause of world peace as an equal and sovereign member of Europe following the path of unity;
- convinced that the unification of Germany into a state with finalized borders is a significant contribution to the cause of peace and stability in the continent;
- submitted by their foreign Ministers in accordance with the Declaration of 13 February 1990 adopted in Ottawa, met on 5 May 1990 in Bonn, on 22 June 1990 in Berlin, on 17 July 1990 in Paris ... September 1990 in Moscow ... In Washington and ... In London. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland participated in the meeting 17 July 1990 in Paris.

The Governments of the participating States have agreed on the international aspects of building German unity as follows.

1. The united Germany will include the territories of the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the whole of Berlin. Its external borders in the final analysis will become the borders of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany from the date of entry into force of the final settlement. Confirmation of the final nature of borders is a fundamental part of the peaceful order in Europe.

The united Germany and the Republic of Poland confirm the existing border between them in a treaty that is binding in accordance with international law.

The united Germany has no territorial claims against other States and will not make such claims in the future.

The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany will ensure that the Constitution of the united Germany will not contain any provisions contrary to these principles. Accordingly, this applies to the provisions set out in the preamble, in articles 23 (phrase 2) and 146 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic take note of the relevant commitments and statements made by the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany and declare that with their implementation the final character of the borders of the unified Germany will be confirmed.

2. The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, on behalf of the German people proclaim that the united Germany will build its policy in such a way that only peace could come from its territory. No military action will be taken from its territory against anyone, either on its own or in alliance with other states, except in the exercise of the legitimate right of self-defense. There will also be no military activities of third States in its territory directed against anyone.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic take note of that Declaration and, for their part, confirm that they will be guided by the same principles in their relations with the United Germany.

3. The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany declare that the united Germany will not produce, possess or acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The United Germany reaffirms its participation in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic take note of this obligation.

4. The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany reaffirm their joint declaration at the Vienna talks on the reduction of conventional weapons meaning that the military strength of the united Germany will not exceed in total the limit of 370 thousand persons for Ground, Air and Naval forces. Reductions to this level will be made over a maximum period of four years, starting with the entry into force of the first Vienna Agreement.

The Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic take note of this statement.

5. The United Germany and the Soviet Union will conclude a treaty on conditions of stay, reduction and withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of the former GDR in the context of the decisions to be taken at the negotiations in Vienna to reduce to a certain level the military forces and weapons of each participant of negotiations.

During the period of stay of the Soviet troops, which will not exceed 4 years from the date of entry into force of the aforementioned treaty, in the territory of the united Germany with the exception of the area of Greater Berlin, there should be no other foreign troops, as well as German troops integrated into NATO. The German territorial defense forces may be deployed there, including the Greater Berlin area. When the withdrawal of Soviet troops is completed, the said territory will remain free from the presence of any foreign troops. Neither will nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery be deployed there.

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6. The question of the temporary stay, reduction and withdrawal of troops of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic from the territory of the former FRG is to be resolved by concluding appropriate treaties between the united Germany and the States mentioned.

7. The troops of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic will not cross the line coinciding with the current state border between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, excluding the movement of their troops located in the Western sectors of Berlin. The troops of the Soviet Union, for their part, will also not cross the line.

8. With the entry in force of the final international legal settlement with Germany, the occupation regime of the western sectors of Berlin is terminated.

At the same time, allied agreements on the Berlin air corridors, the Berlin control zone and the military transit via ground communications shall cease to have effect. The tripartite Allied Commandant's office in the western sectors of Berlin is to be disbanded and military missions and other diplomatic missions accredited to the Allied authorities in Berlin should be abolished.

The quadripartite Agreement of 3 September 1971 is to be annulled.

The troops of the Four powers will remain in Berlin for the period Soviet troops are in the GDR. The terms of their stay will be regulated by the treaties between the united Germany and the Governments concerned. The number of military contingents of the Four powers, areas of their deployment and the nature of their weapons will remain unchanged. Nuclear weapons and means of their delivery will not be deployed in Berlin.

The parties will facilitate the use of Berlin's resources for the establishment of all-European security and cooperation structures, including the placement of relevant authorities in this city.

9. The Governments of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany declare that the united Germany

- recognizes the legality of the measures and decisions taken by the Four powers in matters of denazification, demilitarization and democratization, jointly or separately in their former occupation zones. The legality of these decisions, including those related to property and land issues, will not be subject to review by German courts or other German state bodies;

- will help to ensure that fair compensation is provided to persons employed for forced labor in Germany during the Second World War;

- will take all measures to prevent the revival of Nazi political ideology, as well as National Socialist political parties and movements. If such parties and movements are created, their activities will be prohibited;

- will ensure inviolability of memorials and other monuments erected on the German territory in memory of sacrifices made by peoples to defeat fascism, as well as of military graves of citizens of the countries of the anti-Hitler<sup>5</sup> coalition and will provide proper care for these objects;

5 *Adolf Hitler (1889–1945)*, [dodis.ch/P535](https://dodis.ch/P535), *Führer of the German Third Reich 1933–1945*.

– confirm the validity of international treaties and agreements concluded by the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany in accordance with the principle “*Pacta sunt servanda*” and, if necessary, conduct negotiations with States party to previously concluded treaties on clarifying, amending or terminating of existing obligations and replacing them with new ones on the basis of mutual agreement of the Parties.

The Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic take note of this statement.

10. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the French Republic declare that with the entry into force of the Final International Legal Settlement with Germany, their rights and responsibility for Germany on the whole and Berlin are to be terminated, and the united Germany acquires all the prerogatives of a sovereign state. Accordingly, all the reservations made by the Four powers with the admission of the two German states to the United Nations are recalled.

This statement should be considered as an integral part of all the foregoing provisions of this document.

11. This Final international legal settlement with Germany will be submitted to the meeting of the Heads of States and Governments who signed the Helsinki Final Act.

It will be entered in force after the implementation of the constitutional procedures as stipulated in the legislation of the States parties.

Done at (place) (date),

Copies, in the Russian, English, French and German languages, each of which is equally authentic.

Signatures

[dodis.ch/52963](https://dodis.ch/52963)

Netherlands

*Telegram<sup>1</sup> from the Dutch Ambassador in Bonn, Jan van der Tas<sup>2</sup>, to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek<sup>3</sup>*

#### SITUATION IN GDR

Confidential

Bonn, 9 August 1990

The first economic counsellor<sup>4</sup> had a conversation with Ministerialdirektor Dr. Becker<sup>5</sup>, Director General for Industry at the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and also leader of the *Leitungsstab Deutschland*, in which all economic aspects of the German reunification were coordinated.

Dr. Becker acknowledged that industry in the GDR is in big trouble, but this was also generally expected. On questions regarding the economic background of the increasingly rapid acceleration of the unification process Dr. Becker replied as follows.

Both the government and the civil service apparatus in the GDR are apparently functioning worse and worse, now that real difficulties arise. The government started with enthusiasm at the time, but is showing less and less effectiveness. The ministers do not do much other than catalogue what kind of money they all need. The Minister of Finance does nothing apart from making sums for one thing and another and sending them to Minister Waigel<sup>6</sup> with requests for more money. The Minister of Finance of the GDR is thus no counterweight to the demands of the other departments. Everything is shifted on to the FRG. The civil service is in fact still the old Honnecker<sup>7</sup> apparatus. Becker did not want to claim that all officials are ideologically motivated to thwart progress, but at the very least they lack insight into the market economy. Furthermore, they are not used to making decisions, for fear of being held financially responsible for policy actions (sale of land to investors) and finally they are completely uncertain about their position. Becker said that of the 5,500 employees at the GDR Ministry of Economic Affairs,

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 394 (incoming, translated from Dutch): Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs BuZa 1985-1990, blok Z-299, [NA 2.05.392] inv.nr. 4601[2129].

<sup>2</sup> Jan van der Tas (1928–2009), [dodis.ch/P57557](https://dodis.ch/P57557), Dutch Ambassador in Bonn 1986–1993.

<sup>3</sup> Hans van den Broek (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57462](https://dodis.ch/P57462), Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs 4.11.1982–3.1.1993.

<sup>4</sup> Berend van Gorkom (\*1942), [dodis.ch/P57576](https://dodis.ch/P57576), First economic counsellor of the Dutch Embassy in Bonn, 1989–1990.

<sup>5</sup> Jürgen Becker (\*1953), [dodis.ch/P57577](https://dodis.ch/P57577), Director General for Industry at the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the FRG.

<sup>6</sup> Theo Waigel (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P54838](https://dodis.ch/P54838), Finance Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–27.10.1998.

<sup>7</sup> Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

only some 400 would be taken on by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs. The rest will soon be dismissed, a perspective that is not exactly motivating.

If one arrives at the communal level in the command chain, individual responsibility or initiative is completely absent. Here orders from above are still awaited. Because of this, the government guidelines at work level remain virtually unnoticed, much to the detriment of investment activity from the west. If one adds to this picture the Volkskammer, which time and again passes laws that seriously impede entrepreneurship resp. investment (limitation of the possibilities for workforce reductions etc.), then it becomes clear, says spokesman, that real positive economic development in the GDR awaits political unification. This must be achieved as soon as possible, the sooner the better. This will of course not solve all problems immediately but will enable a start to build up from.

In this context he also considered it of great importance that reunification coincides with elections taking place, so that the new government (hopefully with a solid majority) can intervene effectively. A reunification in September or October, but with elections on 2 December is not very attractive for the Federal Government, according to the speaker, also for reasons other than strictly electoral ones. It will immediately be held accountable for an increasingly poor economic situation but will not really be legitimized for the GDR population and will, moreover, be powerless just before elections, like all democratic governments. The SPD naturally sees tactical advantages in such a constellation.

Counsellor then brought the conversation round to the activities of the Treuhandanstalt<sup>8</sup> and the issue of a threatening "liquidity collapse". Spokesman admitted that indeed the money appears not to circulate in the GDR. Wages received are spent on imported goods from the west. The companies in the GDR (i.e. those companies that are in the hands of the Treuhand) thus receive no income. Moreover, what they still sell is not or in any case not immediately paid for. Therefore, there must be a new injection of liquidity every month, which the banks will only do if the Treuhand guarantees this. Since in this so-called watering can<sup>9</sup> method all companies receive credit, including those that will almost certainly go bankrupt in the coming months, the need for selection becomes increasingly urgent. Dr. Becker emphasized that this is absolutely necessary to quickly rid the companies of the already existing view that one only needs to hold up a hand. Spokesman therefore expected many applications for bankruptcies in the near future from manifestly hopeless cases. On the other hand, the potassium mines etc., for example, which certainly belong to the hopeless category, will be spared for a while because they provide 15,000 jobs in a region where practically no other employment is available. Gradually one must try to get a grip on the flow of subsidies.

The rise in unemployment that is already detectable has not so much to do with company closures, but is primarily the result of reducing the infamous "overstaffing". Many inspectors and other unproductive forces are now made redundant. All this was foreseen. Spokesman was surprised that this is now causing such a

<sup>8</sup> Trust Agency, established 17 June 1990 by the GDR authorities to privatize East German enterprises in the process of reunification.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in German: Gießkanne.

- 229 stir in the press. Everybody has known for months that if unemployment in the GDR remains below one million at the end of 1990, one can<sup>10</sup> speak of a development that is better than expected.

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10 *Handwritten note: "could have spoken", because now already 1.2 million unemployed!*



[dodis.ch/52919](https://dodis.ch/52919)

United Kingdom

*Letter<sup>1</sup> from the Deputy Undersecretary of State (Defense) of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, John Weston<sup>2</sup>, to the British Ambassador in Bonn, Sir Christopher Mallaby<sup>3</sup>*

TWO PLUS FOUR: THE END GAME

Personal and Confidential

London, 17 September 1990

Dear Christopher,

1. The minor squall that blew up following David Gow's *Guardian* article of 7 September<sup>4</sup> and German press comment after the treaty signing on 12 September prompts me to put on record a few impressions of the last forty-eight hours before signature of this historic treaty.

2. After four consecutive days work in East Berlin from 4 to 7 September the Political Directors parted late on the Friday with an agreement on an enumerated ten article draft treaty subject to a couple of square bracketed passages and accompanied by a Soviet proposal, which had no status, for a further draft article on "crossing the line". We had agreed to foregather in Moscow in the early evening of 11 September to vet the final technical cosmetics by legal advisers and treaty experts, leaving it to Ministers to resolve on the morning of 12 September the three main outstanding issues (dual capable systems, crossing the line, suspension of QRRs<sup>5</sup>). Signature was then scheduled to take place at 4 pm the same day. This put the Russians under a pleasing time bind.

3. Less than twenty-four hours after we left Berlin, when Bondarenko<sup>6</sup> had reported to Kvitsinsky<sup>7</sup> and Shevardnadze<sup>8</sup> had returned from the Far East, we heard in our respective capitals that the Russians were proposing instead a further full day of Political Director work in Moscow on 11 September (requiring us

<sup>1</sup> Letter: Foreign and Commonwealth Office RS 021/1/90. Copied to HM Representatives at Moscow, Paris and UK Delegation to NATO and to Andrew Wood, British Minister in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> John Weston (\*1938), [dodis.ch/P57460](https://dodis.ch/P57460), Deputy Under-Secretary of State (Defence) in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office 1989–1990.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Christopher Mallaby (\*1936), [dodis.ch/P57461](https://dodis.ch/P57461), British Ambassador in Bonn, 1988–1993.

<sup>4</sup> David Gow (\*1945), [dodis.ch/P57471](https://dodis.ch/P57471), Correspondent of *The Guardian* in Bonn 1989–1995. The headline read: Bonn getting too close to Moscow.

<sup>5</sup> Quadripartite Rights and Responsibilities.

<sup>6</sup> Aleksander Bondarenko (1922–2010), [dodis.ch/P57463](https://dodis.ch/P57463), Head of the Third European Department in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1971–1991 and a Soviet representative in the Two plus Four negotiations.

<sup>7</sup> Yuli Kvitsinsky (1936–2010), [dodis.ch/P57466](https://dodis.ch/P57466), Soviet Ambassador in Bonn, 1986–1990.

<sup>8</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), [dodis.ch/P54603](https://dodis.ch/P54603), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.

to travel to Moscow on 10 September). This transparent attempt to give themselves more room for manoeuvre should in my view have been resisted. But by the time I got Kastrup<sup>9</sup> on the telephone on Sunday 9 September, he had already conceded the point. The Americans being already in Moscow after the Helsinki Summit, we and the French were clearly not in a position to hold out.<sup>10</sup>

4. We duly met in the whitened sepulchre of the Octyabrskaya Hotel on the morning of 11 September. A hastily arranged One plus Three for a few minutes beforehand revealed:

a) intense German annoyance about David Gow in the Guardian of 7 September, over which they suspected the UK; and,

b) that the FRG delegation had already been holding bilaterals with the Russians in an attempt to sew up a deal on the final points, misrepresenting US views (at least to us) into the bargain.

The Russians for their part had advanced the signature ceremony from 4 p.m. to 12.30 p.m. the next day and confirmed that Gorbachev<sup>11</sup> would attend personally. [Kastrup then also told me that he thought the Russians would return to their earlier attempt to get us to drop the words “upon German request” from the provision in Article 5 covering the continued troop presence of the three Allies in Berlin, in an attempt further to blur the distinction between the Allied presence and the residual Soviet forces presence. I told Kastrup, having taken the precaution of speaking to Charles Powell<sup>12</sup> over the weekend before leaving London (the Secretary of State<sup>13</sup> being in Japan), that I knew the Prime Minister’s Office attached importance to retaining those words. This may be partly the origin of the later German press canard that British firmness stemmed from the views of the Prime Minister. I had not however discussed “crossing the line” with Charles Powell, because I did not want to risk placing myself under unrealistic restrictions on that issue. In the event the Russians did not return to the charge on the words “upon German request”.]<sup>14</sup>

5. When we broke at 4 pm on 11 September the position was as described in Moscow Tel No. 1694<sup>15</sup>. Dual capable systems were already safely in the bag. Suspension of QRR did not look a stopper. The real crux was on “crossing the line”. The pass had already been virtually sold for the transitional period covering Soviet troop withdrawal, on the basis that paragraph 1 of Article 5 would preclude any military activity there by armed forces of states other than the Soviet Union and Germany. It also looked uncertain whether for the period thereafter we could hold the position with a provision excluding merely large-scale military manoeu-

<sup>9</sup> Dieter Kastrup (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P57383](https://dodis.ch/P57383), Political Director in the FRG Foreign Ministry, 1988–1991.

<sup>10</sup> *The Helsinki Summit, to discuss the Iraq-Kuwait war, was held between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev on 5 September 1990.*

<sup>11</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Powell (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57468](https://dodis.ch/P57468), Private Secretary to the British Prime Minister, 1983–1991.

<sup>13</sup> Douglas Hurd (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P57401](https://dodis.ch/P57401), British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 26.10.1989–5.7.1995.

<sup>14</sup> Square brackets in original.

<sup>15</sup> This telegram reported that all remaining issues had been settled except crossing the line, which looked precarious because of German weakness and apparent American acquiescence.

vres (as defined by the 1986 Stockholm CSBMs Agreement), which up to then had been Kvitsinsky's professed major preoccupation. Kastrup was arguing for a simple provision against all deployment, coupled with some kind of oral statement; on the grounds that such was the sense of Stavropol: the reference (ill-defined) to manoeuvres appeared to be intended as a compromise. Dufourcq<sup>16</sup> was personally unhappy about this but inhibited by the fact that his Minister was not due to arrive in Moscow until 3.30 a.m. on 12 September. Zoellick's<sup>17</sup> compass was beginning to veer uncertainly.

6. With the Secretary of State's arrival around 5.30 p.m., bilateral Ministerials got under way—Baker<sup>18</sup>/Genscher,<sup>19</sup> Secretary of State/Baker and later Secretary of State/Genscher. The upshot was that we and the Americans (joined by the French) agreed to camp for the rest of the evening on Ministerial instructions to the effect that, if paragraph 1 of Article 5 precluded all military activity during the transitional period, paragraph 3 of Article 5 should go no further than precluding deployment “with the aim of holding large scale military manoeuvres”. But our scheduled resumption at 8 pm that evening was delayed for a further hour by private German/Russian bilateral activity elsewhere – a performance described as “tacky” by Zoellick, who was greatly irritated by it.

7. When Kastrup and Kvitsinsky eventually returned after 9 p.m., the former put to us in the margin before resumption his provisional agreement with the Russians on a simple “no deployment” formula coupled with a four point oral statement by Genscher at the Plenary negotiating session, which the Russians would undertake to listen to in silence. [The Genscher four points were: no large scale military manoeuvres; military activities below that threshold were not specifically excluded but would not necessarily take place, the application of the word “deployment” would be for sovereign Germany to decide; in doing so, she would exercise reason and responsibility and bear in mind the security interests of all.]<sup>20</sup>

8. This triggered sharp open disagreement among the One plus Three on the sidelines of the meeting. The thrust of UK/US/French objections was that the Alliance should not bind itself by treaty with the Soviet Union in a way which would indefinitely foreclose options extending far beyond the foreseeable circumstances and would further limit German sovereignty beyond Stavropol. With 12 billion DM in their kitty and the world expecting signature in little more than twelve hours, we did not need to offer the Russians any more concessions. The German response was that this was all totally unrealistic since peace had broken out in Europe. (“Oh come on! You can't be serious.” was the stock rejoinder.) They also argued that the German word “verlegt” describing the deal at Stavropol went a good way beyond a mere no stationing agreement. When the formal session resumed I asked Kvitsinsky whether he would confirm that silence by Shevardnadze in the face of an oral statement by Genscher could be interpreted at the very least

16 Bertrand Dufourcq (\*1933), [dodis.ch/P57455](https://dodis.ch/P57455), Political Director, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1988–1991.

17 Robert Zoellick (\*1953), [dodis.ch/P57469](https://dodis.ch/P57469), Counsellor, US Department of State, 1989–1992.

18 James Baker (\*1930), [dodis.ch/P56605](https://dodis.ch/P56605), United States Secretary of State 25.1.1989–23.8.1992.

19 Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), [dodis.ch/P15414](https://dodis.ch/P15414), Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

20 Square brackets in original.

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as the Soviet Union not disagreeing with this statement. Kvitsinsky declined to provide any such assurance.

9. After further skirmishing we broke inconclusively around 10.30 pm. At that point there were at least five alternatives in the air.

i) Soviet position: no military activity in transitional period, simple “no deployment” formula thereafter;

ii) US/UK/French proposal: no military activity for transitional period and “no deployment with the aim of holding large-scale military manoeuvres” thereafter;

iii) FRG position: as for the Russians, but with oral statement by Genscher at plenary session on 12 September to which Shevardnadze would make no reply.

iv) Zoellick fallback mark I: instead of formulation at (ii) above, after “no deployment” add new sentence in treaty (crafted with the UK) as follows: “Decisions on whether, and if so what kind of, military activities take place in that part of Germany would be for the sovereign united Germany to make in accordance with provisions of this treaty, the principles reflected in the Preamble and taking account of the security interests of the states party.”

v) Zoellick fallback mark II: simple “no deployment” formula in the Treaty plus a letter from Genscher either to the Three Allied Foreign Ministers or to the NATO Secretary-General setting out the Genscher Four Points.

10. At this juncture the Russians decided to put the frighteners on a bit. They sent senior MFA<sup>21</sup> officials round to each delegation (in my case catching me in my bedroom just short of midnight) to state formally on instructions that because of the failure to agree at official level, the plenary session at 10 am the next day at the Octyabrskaya had been postponed, the timing of signature was in question and the press would have to be informed. Instead Mr Shevardnadze wished to see his Ministerial colleagues alone at a working session in the MFA Mansion at Alexander Tolstoy Street next morning at the same hour. This tactic, which in my view was never convincing since the Russians were under the greatest time pressure of all, got Genscher in enough of a lather for him to go off to see Baker at 1.15 in the morning, when the latter had already taken his sleeping pill and final bedtime drink. [With hindsight this gives a subtle extra flavour to the reference in Baker’s speeches at the plenary session and the press conference on 12 September about free citizens no longer being threatened by a knock on the door at dead of night!]<sup>22</sup>

11. By the following morning, when One plus Three Ministers met at the French Embassy under Dumas’s<sup>23</sup> slightly dishevelled chairmanship, further US/FRG work had produced the form of words which was eventually to become the text of the agreed minute annexed to the Treaty. One plus Three Ministers quickly agreed that they did not wish to hold out for the formulation at paragraph 9 (ii) above at the expense of delaying signature in Moscow. But Baker in particular was clear that if the Administration were to carry the treaty successfully on the Hill, something in writing would be necessary about the provisions on military activity in the former GDR after Soviet troop departure; oral assurances would not do. When we broke from the breakfast the preferred solution was an inspired

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>22</sup> Square brackets in original.

<sup>23</sup> Roland Dumas (\*1922), [dodis.ch/P15651](http://dodis.ch/P15651), French Foreign Minister, 10.5.1988–28.3.1993.

question and answer at the press conference which Shevardnadze would pass to Genscher who would answer in terms of the latest agreed text; this would then be confirmed as a record of the exchange in the press conference by letter from Genscher to his five Two plus Four colleagues or, failing that, to the Three.

12. Genscher and Baker went off to see Shevardnadze. The Russians then let it be known that the timetable for the morning's meetings had reverted to the original plan. Two plus Four Ministers had a private session at the Octyabrskaya Hotel prior to the Plenary session there. It was then that Baker stumbled on the notion of an agreed minute, to be annexed to the treaty and signed in addition to it by all six Ministers. Slightly to everyone's surprise this won Shevardnadze's assent. By this time the German delegation were once more in a highly excitable state, Genscher's Private Secretary, Frank Elbe<sup>24</sup>, being particularly disagreeable, and venting all kinds of nonsense about how close "some people" had come "to screwing it up". The formal plenary session and the predictable speeches for the occasion followed without controversy. We broke to allow final preparations of the text for signature. At this point we moved from the sublime to the ridiculous. The German word-processor back-up went on the blink, thus delaying both German and French texts of the agreed minute. The American delegation, despite being 180 strong in Moscow, were apparently unable to produce a typewriter in the hotel that morning. I began to wonder about the wisdom of having conceded to the Americans the final textual work, the UK team having earned much credit throughout the session in Berlin and the early stages in Moscow with our Toshiba lap-top producing running updates of the texts in near real time around the table.

13. Signature duly followed under Gorbachev's benevolent eye. Bondarenko looked ten years younger on the instant. Champagne and congratulations were lavish. The final forty-eight hours were nevertheless instructive. They brought home for me that, with the arrival of German unity, Germany will not be simply the Federal Republic plus, but a different entity. Looking back on the whole process I see something of a thread running through: the early reluctance of the Germans to discuss politico-military issues at One plus Three, the bilateral concessions made at Stavropol (*pace* Bob Blackwill's valedictory at Carnegie, Zoellick sees that as essentially bilateral) the subsequent systematic ambiguity about what had been agreed there on the troop movement question ("verlegt" in German serving variously as "stationing", "deployed" and "moved" depending on the day and the argument), the *fait accompli* over the exclusion of SOFA/SA<sup>25</sup> from application in the former GDR, the acrimony over the crossing the line issue at the last, Genscher's unforthcoming answer at the press conference to the question about Allied forces in Berlin, and the general obtuseness and emotion on the German side faced with the assertion that an important Alliance interest might be at stake.

14. I do not wish to exaggerate all this or to diminish the achievement, for the Germans and indeed for us all, that German unification represents. We have every reason to work within the Alliance as within the Community to maintain and if possible strengthen the underlying strategic Western solidarity. But as we embark

<sup>24</sup> Frank Elbe (\*1941), [dodis.ch/P57472](http://dodis.ch/P57472), Private Secretary of Hans-Dietrich Genscher 1987–1992.

<sup>25</sup> Status of Forces Agreement/Supplementary Agreement (to the SOFA).

235 on this renewed challenge from 3 October I already begin to feel as I look at our  
German partners that:  
    'You are not the same people who left that station  
    Or who will arrive at any terminus ...'<sup>26</sup>  
I would be interested in your diagnosis.  
Yours ever John

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26 T. S. Eliot, *The Dry Salvages*, *Four Quartets*, Canto III, London, 1944.



[dodis.ch/49561](https://dodis.ch/49561)

Switzerland

*Political report<sup>1</sup> of the Swiss Ambassador in East Berlin, Franz Birrer<sup>2</sup>*

GOODBYE, GDR!

Confidential

East Berlin, 2 October 1990

Today, the history of the GDR ends. The GDR will “join” the German Federal Republic and thus disappear from the political landscape.

When I came to Berlin three years ago, nothing suggested that this “first workers and farmers’ nation on German soil” would perish so soon and so completely. Honecker<sup>3</sup> had just returned from an official visit in Bonn. In the late 80s, he also visited nearly all other Western capitals and continuously welcomed guests of state from there. The citizens of the GDR suffered neither economic nor social hardship. Even the exceedingly critical FAZ noted, as late as June 1989, that measured by the economic malaise of its socialist sister countries, including the Soviet Union, the GDR was “an out-and-out economic plateau”. Its problem was not unemployment but rather labour shortage, due to which tens of thousands from socialist sister countries were used in the production process. And, *nota bene*, our exports to the GDR recorded annual rates of growth of roughly 40%.

In terms of interior policy, the regime showed itself to be more *relaxed* than a new arrival from the West might have expected. GDR citizens you ran into in restaurants or elsewhere typically talked very openly and did not refrain from critical remarks about the country’s conditions. Churches had much more leeway than in other socialist countries (with the exception of Poland). A certain glasnost was notable especially in literature, in the theatre and revue, and in film; some films that had been banned twenty or more years ago – such as “The Russians Are Coming” by Carow<sup>4</sup> – could now be shown. Travel permits for the West soared in number and in 1988 reached more than 3 million visits to the FRG, 1.3 million of these people below retirement age. Legal emigration to the FRG, too, reached annual numbers of about 100,000 people by 1988/89. And so as to mention Switzer-

<sup>1</sup> *Political report No. 16 (translated from German):* Swiss Federal Archives CH-BAR#E2010-02A#1996/400#16\* (A.21.31). Copies to be given to Klaus Jacobi, [dodis.ch/P19511](https://dodis.ch/P19511), Franz Blankart, [dodis.ch/P22246](https://dodis.ch/P22246), and Silvio Arioli, [dodis.ch/P24523](https://dodis.ch/P24523). Copies directly to the Swiss Embassy in Bonn and the Swiss Consulate general in West Berlin; also published in: *Die DDR aus Sicht schweizerischer Diplomaten. Politische Berichte aus Ost-Berlin 1982–1990*, ed. by Bernd Haunfelder, Münster 2017, doc. 93.

<sup>2</sup> Franz Birrer (\*1932), [dodis.ch/P16179](https://dodis.ch/P16179), Swiss Ambassador in East Berlin 1.10.1987–18.12.1990.

<sup>3</sup> Erich Honecker (1912–1994), [dodis.ch/P46563](https://dodis.ch/P46563), General Secretary of the SED and chairman of the GDR State Council 29.10.1976–18.10.1989.

<sup>4</sup> Heiner Carow (1929–1997), [dodis.ch/P54831](https://dodis.ch/P54831), GDR film maker.

land here as well: the number of visa issued for travelling to our country increased by 20% annually (1988: 11,900).

Still, *Stalinist* structures and behaviours constituted the GDR's basic pattern. The centrepiece of Stalinism was and would remain the primacy of the SED or rather of the party leadership, personified in the Secretary General<sup>5</sup> and individual members of the Politburo in charge of state security, economy, and mass media. The other parties, congregated into the National Front and brought into line, and the mass organisations chiefly served alibi purposes. The economy was based on the principle of central planning, despite the GDR leadership's claim to have come up with something special when it came to cooperatives in agriculture, autonomous combines in the industry, and private enterprises in crafts and trades. The private enterprises, for instance, were very strongly restricted by a limitation to 10 employees and by business-hostile tax laws. There were many indicators that the economy was hardly growing any more but was at best stagnating. Under these conditions, environment protection fell by the wayside in a catastrophic manner.

The SED communists had originally aspired to provide everyone with *apartments, food*, and convenience goods, as well as public transport, in sufficient amounts and at low prices. They had largely succeeded, too, by means of a massive system of subsidies and by accelerating the industrial building of houses. But they proved unable and unwilling to adjust this policy to changing needs, and to remedy grave disadvantages. Freezing rents at the post-war level meant that not just the private building of flats, but also the maintenance of extant houses and flats was rendered impossible. The desolate state of many urban and village centres is a strong indication of this policy's shortcomings.

Likewise, Stalinist were the system of across-the-board informers used by the so-called "*State Security*" as well as the bullying and bringing in line of *mass media*. At best, a kind of glasnost existed in the specialised press and in Church print-media. Daily press, radio, and television, by contrast, remained under strict control. In November 1988, even the Soviet journal "*Sputnik*" was prohibited, as the SED regime disliked a number of contributions. All this appeared profusely absurd, given that the population could easily learn about domestic events and events abroad from West German radio and TV.

However, one cannot evaluate the GDR solely with a view to the SED. From the very beginning, the *Soviet Union* played a decisive role here. In a manner of speaking, the GDR was an accidental product of WWII and the Cold War. When, in 1948/49, the Western Bloc states undertook a currency reform in the three Western zones as well as in the Western sectors of Berlin, and founded the German Federal Republic, the Soviet Union, for its part, founded the GDR and for a long time kept it on a short leash. This was initially still the case under *Gorbachev*<sup>6</sup>. When Honecker first met with the new Kremlin chief on 5 Mai 1985, he had to sign a joint communiqué that made a direct connection between the Soviet Union's military victory over the German Reich and the formation of the GDR, by declaring:

<sup>5</sup> Erich Honecker.

<sup>6</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev (\*1931), [dodis.ch/P31707](https://dodis.ch/P31707), General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.



“the first nation of workers and farmers on German soil has its roots in this great victory...”. It was (for the SED leadership) a most humiliating acknowledgement of the GDR’s heteronomy. Gorbachev also stuck to this position in his book “Pere-stroika”, published in autumn 1987. He dedicated an entire chapter to Germany, titled “Two German states”, and explained that what had here been historically formed would have to be entrusted to history. He wrote that there were now two German states with different social and political structures; Western declarations claiming that the German question remained open and that “German Unity” had to be restored he deemed anything but “realpolitik”. Gorbachev thus cannot be considered the father of the two German states’ unification. Rather, it was wrested from him. He was no longer able to resist it, as the Soviet Union had become too weak.

For most GDR citizens, the “big brother”, the Soviet Union, was never an example, yardstick, or a reference point for action and aspiration. There never was a fraternisation. The *Soviet troops* in the GDR and the population were kept strictly separate. The troops, which exceeded 400,000 in number, remained an occupational force and at the same time a visible guarantor that the GDR remained closely integrated in the tight “socialist community”.

The *older generations* of GDR citizens by and by resigned to what seemed inevitable and tried to adapt. Occasionally, there was also pride in having achieved more than the Soviet Union economically. This was even expressed in remarks by the GDR leadership regarding Soviet efforts towards economic reform, by way of wishing Moscow the best of luck in this and intimating that the GDR had long ago carried out such reforms. This in turn startled the *younger and increasingly more impatient generation*, who concluded from this that no further development was to be expected under the old SED leadership.

This resulted in the great flight or emigration movement via West German diplomatic missions in East Berlin, Prague, and Warsaw, as well as via the Austrian-Hungarian border once it had been opened by the Hungarian government in September 1989. The *FRG’s migrant policy* played a decisive role in this. Every migrant from the GDR has always been automatically recognised as a federal citizen. He not only enjoyed preferential treatment in the housing and job markets, but received, in addition to the “welcome money”, a number of different financial allowances or interest-free loans, and possibly qualified for unemployment benefits, sickness benefits, and a pension, just like someone who paid his dues in the FRG for all his life.

It was most likely this mass movement that prompted Gorbachev to remark, in the course of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in East Berlin, that he was in favour of further reforms in the GDR and that the Soviet troops would remain alert. Mass demonstrations under the slogans “We are the people” und “We are staying here” subsequently brought down the SED leadership in a matter of weeks.

How the *Berlin Wall* and the inner German border came to be *opened* on 9 November has today not yet been explained. The Stoph<sup>7</sup> government, which has already resigned, had put forward for discussion a draft of a liberal travel law,

<sup>7</sup> Willi Stoph (1914–1999), [dodis.ch/P15220](http://dodis.ch/P15220), Chairman of the GDR Council of Ministers 21.9.1964–3.10.1973 and 29.10.1976–13.11.1989.

which was criticised, however, as being still too restrictive (particularly by lawyers, such as Gregor Gysi<sup>8</sup>); but instead of revising the draft, the government, without further ado, opened the floodgates. Whatever was behind that decision, the opening was the beginning of the end of the GDR.

Since then, the development has accelerated several times over, where the acceleration was usually attributed to public pressure. What was decisive in this process, however, were more likely the actions of *Federal Chancellor Kohl*<sup>9</sup>, who single-handedly defined the central milestones and, as his critics acidly put it, regarded German Unity as a private matter of his. Recall here Kohl's

- refusal to abolish *migrants'* privileges after the opening of the border (the official "emergency process of admittance" and the financial incentives were only abolished on 1 July);

- *reunification address* of 28 November, with a 10-point programme that had not been coordinated with anyone else;

- suggestion (against the advice of all experts and economic politicians) of a *monetary union*, i.e. the introduction of the DM in the GDR with a "social cushioning" of the negative consequences to be expected (in the campaign for the GDR People's Chamber election of 18 March, the Western CDU chiefly operated on the promise that GDR citizens would have the DM before the summer holidays; the "first free and secret elections in the GDR", conducted from the FRG, are perhaps to be considered not so much as democratic but rather as *DM-cratic*);

- demand to regard Article 23 of the Bonn Basic Law as the "royal road" to German Unity, i.e. "*accession*" of the GDR to the German Federal Republic, not unification or fusion of the two German states according to Article 146;

- suggestion on the evening of 13 May, when CDU and CSU had suffered electoral defeats in in North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony, and Bavaria, to hold nationwide elections the same year (Kohl evidently intended to seize the moment and to get the elections over and done with before the full extent of the fallout of the monetary union would become seen and felt).

Chancellor Kohl was thus not the promoter, but the actual engine of German Unity. He believed his suggestions won him the support of the GDR's population, which primarily pursued the DM and Western prosperity. President von Weizsäcker<sup>10</sup>, for example, pointed out that Germany's two parts must not be allowed to rampantly grow together, but should grow together. Prime Minister de Maizière<sup>11</sup>, too, spoke out this June in favour of reasonable timeframes and declared that the future course of Germany's unification must not be defined by an express pace set by Bonn. Kohl, however, ignored these and similar objections, and categorically refused any dispute with the opposition. From a purely managerial point of view, one can certainly admire Kohl's approach and his successes, although from a political point of view they appear quite problematic.

Superficial observers have praised Kohl's idea of a rapid *monetary union* as a stroke of genius and pointed out that the monetary reform of 1948 soon produced

<sup>8</sup> Gregor Gysi(\*1948), [dodis.ch/P54811](https://dodis.ch/P54811), GDR lawyer and Leader of the PDS, 1989–1993.

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>10</sup> Richard von Weizsäcker (1920–2015), [dodis.ch/P5944](https://dodis.ch/P5944), President of the FRG, 1.7.1984–30.6.1994.

<sup>11</sup> Lothar de Maizière (\*1940), [dodis.ch/P54809](https://dodis.ch/P54809), GDR Prime Minister 12.4–2.10.1990.

an unforeseen boom. They overlook, however, that a monetary union and a monetary reform have only little in common and took place or take place in completely different contexts. The chancellor's personal appointee in charge of the monetary union termed the latter an "experiment unique in history", namely, "a uno-actu transformation of a centralised economy, which previously was socialist for over 45 years and before that national socialist for 12 years, into a market economy". Specifically, this means:

- central planning was abolished overnight, which created chaos particularly in the industrial sector and doomed many enterprises that under different circumstances could have been restored to profitability (this apparently caused West German and other investors to hold off until they could obtain the GDR enterprises at no charge);
- prices were decontrolled at a single stroke (exceptions until the end of this year: rents, some public transport fees, and energy prices);
- the inner German border wasn't just opened, but abolished, thus exposing the GDR economy, via the FRG and the European Community, to the full force of international competition;
- agricultural subsidies or rather the subsidies, which were extremely large in the GDR, reducing prices on local foodstuffs (1988: 31.9 billion M or DM) were cancelled overnight, as a result of which the agricultural sector experienced further, enormous hardship, i.e. in addition to losing the protection of the border;
- by throwing central planning overboard, the public sector lost most of its major revenue sources, namely contributions by the economy; a fiscal system based on the FRG's example is only now under construction, and since the monetary union has also transferred the financial and monetary sovereignty to Bonn, and the federal government is urging spending cuts, the public funds are lacking that just now would be so direly needed in housing and road construction, in restoring health care, in cultural work, etc. (this is exacerbated by the fact that the GDR's 15 districts will be eliminated, but the five states replacing them will only gradually be built from 14 October onwards).

The former GDR's economy is thus running the risk of losing both the domestic market as well as that of the Eastern European countries, which until now has been very important for it (70% of the foreign trade volume). There can be little doubt that its current chances of success in Western markets are very small. In other words, the territories of the former GDR are facing the loss of production and of creation of value.

Whereas the treaty creating an economic, monetary, and social union had been drafted and dictated exclusively in Bonn – its signing by the then GDR minister of finance seemed to outside observers like the signing of a capitulation – in the second contract, also called the *Unification Treaty*, the GDR was apparently able to preserve and defend certain specific interests of the five new federal states. This is true, for instance, of property issues (the land reform predating the founding of the GDR is not reversed), of interim rulings on abortion, etc., as well as of *economic development*. Based on Article 28, much as the former border territory was, the entire GDR territory has now become a development zone of the joint task "improvement of regional economic structures". It thus becomes a recipient of

many investment subsidies and low-interest loans. This can be seen as a kind of Marshall Plan for the former GDR.

Yet on reading Article 7 of the treaty more closely, one gains a different impression. It basically provides for the FRG financial constitution to be extended to the acceded states. The extant states, however, have strictly *refused* to include the new states in the *equalization payments between states* and in the even distribution of states' shares in *value added tax*. They will not enter negotiations on equalization payments before 1994, and the GDR states' share in value added tax is for now set at only 55% of the other states' average share per capita. As a result, the "German Unity" fund, originally intended for the promotion of investment, now serves to close the new federal states' fiscal holes and is indirectly co-financed by the latter. The Hanover-based constitutionalist Schneider<sup>12</sup> comments: "The GDR states will remain bound in the unity fund for years, depending on and patronised by the federation not only financially, but also politically".

From a general and European point of view, *German Unity* is doubtlessly to be welcomed.

The division of Europe, Germany, and Berlin has always been an artificial, even absurd division and a germ of present and future conflicts.

We now have on our border a country that will shortly rise to the status of a major power, perhaps even a superpower. Unlike in the past, however, this country has a federal structure, is firmly democratic, inimical to militaristic matters and moreover integrated into the European Community and NATO.

Yet the rushed nature of German Unity must give us pause. It is not a unification, but an appropriation of the GDR by the FRG, which can for instance be seen in the fact that, starting tomorrow, West German officials, judges, economic leaders, etc. will "invade" this country and replace GDR people. "The Price of Unity is a New Foreign Rule", as historian Jörg Fisch<sup>13</sup> appropriately titled his article, which is well worth reading, in the *Weltwoche* of 20 September 1990.

Will the new state be able to become a native country, even a home, to all Germans? Will the East Germans be able to identify with it, or will they once again merely come to terms with it, as many of them did for so long with the "socialist home country GDR"? Can a mezzogiornalisation of East Germany, and a radicalisation that would almost necessarily follow from it, be avoided? All of these are questions that can only be answered in the years to come.

<sup>12</sup> Hans-Peter Schneider (\*1937), [dodis.ch/P54833](http://dodis.ch/P54833), FRG constitutional lawyer.

<sup>13</sup> Jörg Fisch (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P22386](http://dodis.ch/P22386), Swiss historian.

[dodis.ch/53174](https://dodis.ch/53174)

Poland

*Memorandum<sup>1</sup> by the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Krzysztof Skubiszewski<sup>2</sup>*

URGENT NOTE CONCERNING THE TALKS BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER T. MAZOWIECKI<sup>3</sup> AND  
CHANCELLOR H. KOHL<sup>4</sup> IN FRANKFURT AN DER ODER AND SLUBICE ON 8 NOVEMBER  
THIS YEAR

Warsaw, 11 November 1990

I. In the course of talks held by Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki and the FRG's Federal Chancellor H. Kohl in Frankfurt an der Oder and Slubice on 8 November the following was arranged:

*1. Treaties*

- a) This November in Warsaw, the Foreign Ministers are to sign a Treaty between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany confirming the existing border between them<sup>5</sup>.
- b) The process to negotiate the Treaty on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation is to be completed by late January 1991<sup>6</sup>.
- c) The two aforementioned treaties will be submitted together for ratification by the parliaments of Poland and FRG, by late February 1991 at the latest.

*2. Movement of people*

- a) The FRG government has already decided to lift the visa requirement for Polish citizens (on a reciprocal basis) and intends to implement this decision later this year<sup>7</sup>. With this in mind, it entered into official consultations with France and the Benelux countries (the so-called Schengen group). A positive decision by the Schengen Five is due in late November; it would make it possible to remove visas for travel to these countries, before Christmas if possible (by way of an exchange of diplomatic notes).

<sup>1</sup> *Memorandum (translated from Polish):* Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 15/94, w. 1. Prepared by Jerzy Sulek, [dodis.ch/P57584](https://dodis.ch/P57584).

<sup>2</sup> Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), [dodis.ch/P57377](https://dodis.ch/P57377), Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

<sup>3</sup> Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1927–2013), [dodis.ch/P57378](https://dodis.ch/P57378), Prime Minister of Poland 24.8.1989–12.1.1991.

<sup>4</sup> Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), [dodis.ch/P31852](https://dodis.ch/P31852), Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

<sup>5</sup> Treaty between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany Concerning the Demarcation of the Established and Existing Polish-German State Frontier signed in Warsaw on 14 November 1990.

<sup>6</sup> Treaty between the Republic of Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany on Good Neighbourly Relations and Friendly Cooperation signed in Bonn on 17 June 1991.

<sup>7</sup> Agreement on the Abolition of the Visa Requirement concluded in the form of exchange of notes on 4 April 1991.

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b) Polish consular, passport, and customs services will take actions — in coordination with their counterparts from the FRG, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg — to ensure smooth handling of the expected increased movement of people from and to Poland and to ensure it is not abused for purposes that contradict the agreement about to be concluded (e.g. illicit trade, smuggling, taking up work without permit). The number of border crossings will be expanded; they will be extended and upgraded; passport and customs clearances will be simplified and streamlined but with the simultaneous introduction of more stringent customs checks and more severe administrative measures against people who abuse the freedom of visa-free travel, etc.

c) As soon as possible, i.e. to the extent practicable in the first quarter of 1991, a pilot project will be launched: the construction, at the FRG's cost, of a 10km-section of a six-lane motorway on both sides of the border (5km from Frankfurt an der Oder into Germany + 5km from Swiecko into Poland).

### 3. *Regional cooperation, especially between border regions*

a) The following will be established: A Joint Inter-Governmental Commission for Regional Cooperation and a Joint Border Commission (composed of representatives of Polish provinces, border towns, communes and FRG Länder located along the border).

b) In 1991, a separate Poland-FRG treaty will be made on regional cooperation.

c) Relevant provisions will be adopted in the Treaty on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation.

### 4. *Youth exchange*

Youth exchanges should grow several times in 1991 as compared with this year (expected levels of 6,000–7,000 people). The composition of the Polish-German Youth Exchange Council will be considerably changed. Furthermore, a joint Office for the organisation of youth exchanges will be established (modelled after the Deutsch-Französisches Jugendwerk).

### 5. *Aid for forced labourers and concentration camp prisoners*

In January 1991, the heads of government of the two countries will reach agreement about using a pragmatic approach (foundation, fund) with respect to the aforementioned category of Polish citizens who had suffered under the Third Reich.

## II. *On economic and financial cooperation between Poland and the FRG:*

1. A list of our most important proposals and suggestions will be drawn up, together with a short statement of grounds (non-paper), which will be conveyed to the FRG accompanied by a personal letter from Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki to Chancellor Kohl; this will be a working basis for talks between Deputy Prime Minister L. Balcerowicz<sup>8</sup> and H. Kohl (the FRG Chancellor reiterated his invitation for a visit). On this basis, H. Kohl will support relevant Polish efforts at the

<sup>8</sup> Leszek Balcerowicz (\*1947), [dodis.ch/P57596](https://dodis.ch/P57596), Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance 1989–1991.



EEC summit (14 December this year), in the Paris Club, and among the 24 countries. The non-paper should specifically address such issues as Poland's association with the EEC, write-off of Poland's debts, compensation for the losses over the Gulf crisis, cooperation projects within the FRG-Poland-USSR triangle (e.g. construction of homes for Soviet soldiers returning from the former GDR, food shipments for the USSR), or perhaps the issue of Poland's losses in connection with the reunification of Germany.

2. *Employment of Polish contract workers in Germany*: Our consent to signing a new Polish-German pension agreement has been made conditional on the acceptance of our proposal, i.e. retention of the current employment limits (11,000 in the FRG, 35,000 in the former GDR).

3. *Financial and economic costs of German reunification*

If this issue cannot be resolved still this year, the heads of Polish and FRG governments will raise the issue of *rouble conversions* in our trade with the former GDR area in January 1991.

### III. Other

1. *Transfer of military equipment, weapons and ammunition from the FRG to Poland from the stocks of the former GDR National People's Army*: H. Kohl has agreed to meet some of the Polish side's requests (mainly with respect to ammunition, rifles, and combat vehicles); this matter will be conclusively settled during the coming FRG visit of the Polish Minister of National Defence<sup>9</sup>. It will be also essential for Poland to obtain approval from the USSR. At H. Kohl's request, this matter should for the time being be given a low profile (pending its successful conclusion), among others because of similar efforts by Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic.

2. *Transit of Soviet troops from the former GDR through Poland into the USSR* (costs to be covered by the FRG). A joint panel of experts will be set up to discuss this issue. It will be also raised during the FRG visit of the Polish Minister of National Defence.

3. *Reinstallation of a TV/radio transmitter on Sniezka* (removed in 1980 at the request of the GDR), funded by the FRG, for broadcasting in Polish, German, and Czech. Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki has promised to grant this FRG request; at the same time he noted the need to implement projects to launch TV/radio channels for the Polish diaspora and emigrants in the FRG.

IV. I ask the ministries concerned to promptly contact the relevant FRG authorities in order to implement the aforementioned decisions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to be updated on an ongoing basis on progress in this area.

<sup>9</sup> Piotr Kołodziejczyk (\*1939), [dodis.ch/P57612](https://dodis.ch/P57612), Polish Minister of National Defence 6.7.1990–23.12.1991.





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## When the Wall Came Down

The Perception of German Reunification  
in International Diplomatic Documents  
1989–1990

Marc Dierikx and Sacha Zala (eds.)

«Ab sofort» – On 9 November 1989 the unexpected happened. After months of crisis, with tens of thousands of citizens fleeing the country through various means and routes, the government of the German Democratic Republic suddenly announced that it opened up the border crossings for travel to West Berlin forthwith.

Even diplomats, proficiently well-informed, had not seen this coming. Reactions by foreign envoys expressed concerns, warning of a ‘specter of German reunification’ that might upset the stability in Europe. Promoted by the West German government in Bonn, reunification became the keyword for all subsequent developments. Suddenly, agreements signed in 1945 took on a new immediacy.

Yet four decades after the end of the war, the right of the German people to self-determination was beyond dispute. The rapid pace of developments presented challenges to foreign and German diplomats alike. This volume collects perspectives on German developments from eleven countries (Austria, Canada, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States).

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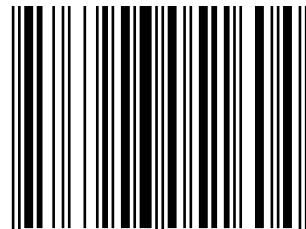
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