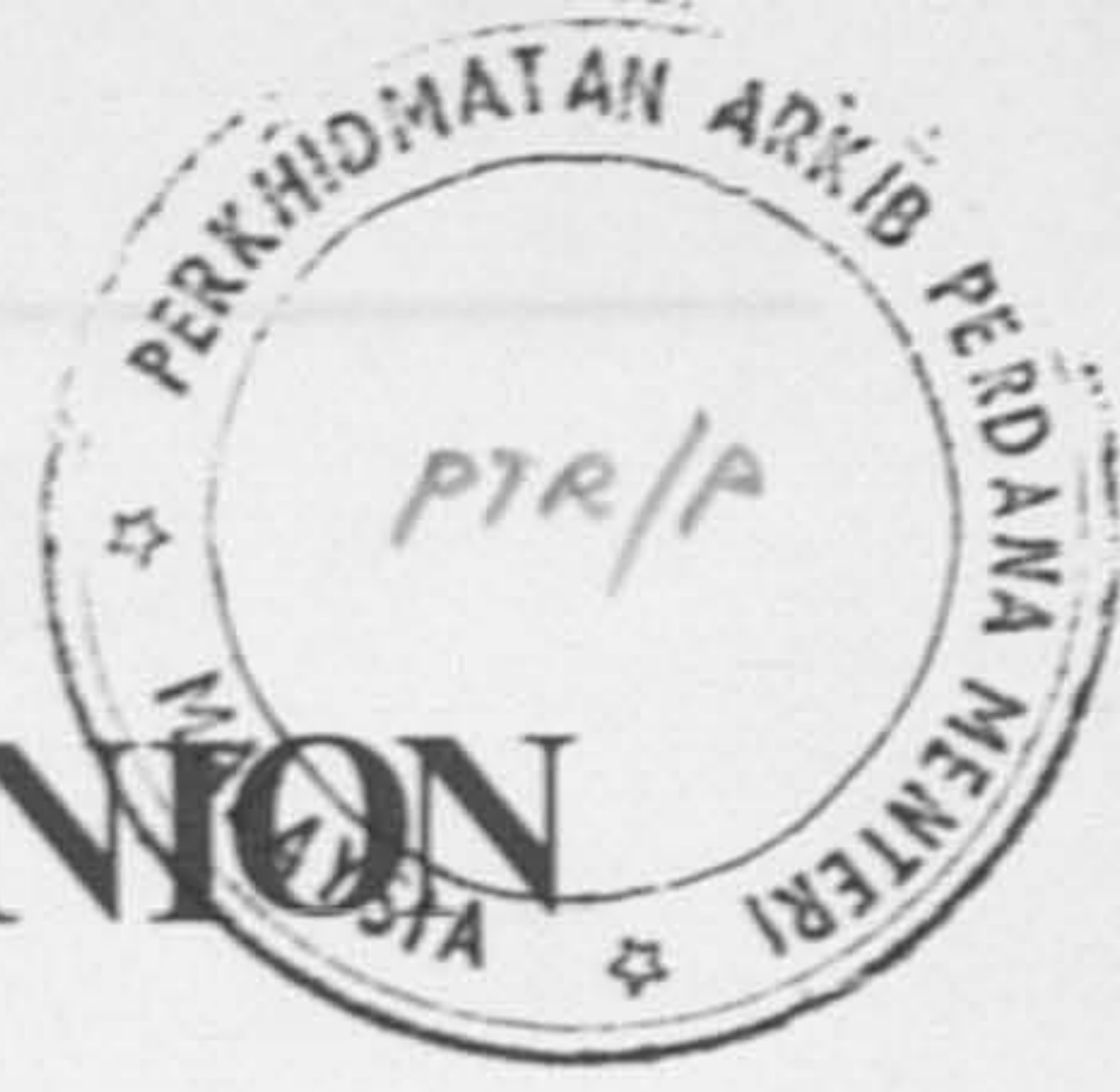


**WORLD PUBLIC OPINION
AND
THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT**

**Session of
the Presidential Committee of the
World Peace Council**

Sofia, February 1977

World Peace Council Information Centre



Contents

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Sofia, February 1977

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The power of the peoples

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The significance attached to the work of the session was emphasized by the fact that it was opened by the reading of a special address by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council, Comrade Todor Zhivkov.

Writing all across to the session, President Todor Zhivkov warned the participants that

"... The constructive and humane work of your forum aimed at unity of action by all forces of peace and social progress, at the development and deepening of mutual understanding between nations, at the establishment of a world free of wars, of slavery and oppression - finds a profound response in every Bulgarian heart."

This address, which was read by Comrade Penicho Kabardinaki, President of the National Council of the Fatherland Front and member of the Political Bureau of the Bulgarian Communist Party, was received with great enthusiasm by the participants and served to set the keynote for the session.

The power of the peoples

Introduction

"The need of the hour is a world-wide offensive by world public opinion for the carrying forward of the spirit of Helsinki, for the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, for new initiatives to consolidate Helsinki, to make détente an irreversible process".

Over 200 delegates from all over the world took part in the session of the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council, held in Sofia, capital of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, on February 11 and 12, 1977.

The political key issue discussed at this session was: **World Public Opinion and the Helsinki Final Act.**

It was only four months before the proposed meeting in Belgrade of representatives of the 35 states, signatories to the Final Act, to review the implementation of the Act. The World Peace Council's leadership exchanged views on ways in which popular action could defeat the attempts of the cold warriors to undermine and destroy the spirit of Helsinki – attempts which have taken the form of a sinister propaganda campaign of falsehoods and lies, directed at creating a climate of hatred and mistrust and a consequent accentuation of the arms build-up of the NATO powers.

The session of the Presidential Committee was preceded by a Conference of representatives of the peace movements of European countries and the USA and Canada, which went deeply into the problem and prepared a draft document for consideration by the Presidential Committee.

It was this draft which was the basis of the discussion in the session of the Presidential Committee, which later unanimously adopted it.

The significance attached to the work of the session was emphasised by the fact that it was opened by the reading of a special address by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council, Comrade Todor Zhivkov.

Wishing all success to the session, President Todor Zhivkov assured the participants that

"... The constructive and humane work of your forum aimed at unity of action by all forces of peace and social progress, at this development and deepening of mutual understanding between nations, at the establishment of a world free of wars, of misery and oppression – finds a profound response in every Bulgarian heart."

This address, which was read by Comrade Pentcho Kubadinski, President of the National Council of the Fatherland Front and member of the Political Bureau of the Bulgarian Communist Party, was received with great enthusiasm by the participants and served to set the keynote for the session.

The meeting of representatives of the peace movements of Europe and of the USA and Canada had been opened earlier by Comrade Vladimir Bonev, President of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, who placed before the participants the views of his government and people on the impact of the Helsinki Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Secretary General of the World Peace Council, Romesh Chandra, in his addresses at the inauguration of the Presidential Committee session and at the opening of the meeting of representatives of peace movements of Europe and the USA and Canada, emphasised the vital significance of the Helsinki Final Act for the whole world, for all continents.

"Helsinki was born, yes, first through the struggle of the peoples of Europe, but at the same time it is a fact that it would not have been possible without the change which was brought about through the struggles of all the peoples of the world..."

The Secretary General emphasised further that equally

"Helsinki has created favorable new conditions for the struggles of every people... new possibilities... for the advance of every people fighting for a new life, fighting against imperialism, fascism, against oppression, against injustice."

The discussions round the theme of **World Public Opinion and the Helsinki Final Act** were rich and full of valuable information. The dialogue enabled different viewpoints to express themselves. Detailed discussions took place in a large and representative Drafting Committee, which succeeded in bringing all points of view together in the document which was finally adopted unanimously by the session.

Characteristic of the session was the participation of representatives of very broad and different political forces – parties and mass organisations.

The largest delegation came from Greece and included parliamentarians of different parties, leaders of trade unions and other mass movements, outstanding figures in the cultural field, headed by the famous actress Melina Mercouri, leaders of the peace movement, of several organisations of lawyers, composers, writers, chairmen and members of city councils and other local bodies.

The participants also welcomed the presence of a strong delegation from Turkey, representing the trade unions and other democratic mass organisations.

The delegations from various countries represented a wide spectrum of political parties – among them socialist and labour parties, communist parties, centre and agrarian parties, liberal and radical parties, national and patriotic parties as well as the broadest range of mass organisations.

The Presidential Committee session also devoted itself to a discussion of the reports presented by two commissions established by its Bureau in December 1976: the first, a commission to examine proposals for changes in the rules and regulations of the World Peace Council, necessitated by the growth of the movement; and the second, a commission on preparations for the observance in 1978–80 of the thirtieth anniversary of the World Peace Movement.

These discussions led to broad conclusions which have now been placed for consideration before the international and national organisations represented in the WPC. Following this world-wide and detailed consultation, concrete decisions will be taken at the forthcoming session of the Council, to be held in May 1977.

The Presidential Committee decided on a number of awards of its medals and other distinctions to outstanding individuals and collective bodies.

The Presidential Committee session was followed by a meeting of the International Preparatory Committee for the World Assembly of Builders of Peace, to be held in Warsaw from May 6 to 11, 1977. This meeting adopted an Appeal for the Assembly; finalised proposals for the themes of the various commissions, forums, round tables of the Assembly; adopted a provisional timetable for the Assembly and discussed details of the preparatory work at the international and national levels.

From Sofia to Warsaw. — The Sofia meetings with their emphasis on the Helsinki Final Act and world public opinion have strengthened the world-wide movement for the carrying out of the key task of today for all peoples: that of making détente an irreversible process, of defending and building peace.

Address of greetings

by Todor Zhivkov

First Secretary of the Central Committee of the
Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the
State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria

I am happy to have the honour, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the State Council and the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on behalf of the Bulgarian people, most cordially to greet you — the participants in the session of the Presidium of the World Peace Council and to wish you fruitful work. For a second time in the last few years our country plays host to major manifestations of the world peace movement, and the Bulgarian people have the possibility immediately to express their profound attachment to the cause of peace and cooperation among nations.

Our joy is greater because of the fact that the Sofia Session of the Presidium of the World Peace Council is held on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, the most remarkable event in the 20th century, which radically changed the course of the development of all mankind. Born in the crucial days of the October Revolution, in the spirit of Lenin's Decree on Peace, the Soviet state and later also the other countries of the socialist community raised high aloft the banner of peace as an unswerving and foremost task of their foreign policy. The programme adopted by the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for a further struggle for peace and international cooperation, for freedom and independence of nations and the initiatives in the foreign policy of the socialist countries enjoy the approval and support of all peace-loving progressive and democratic forces. That is why we are fully justified to say that the great ideas of the October Revolution are for us a powerful call to fulfil the noble and humane aspirations of the epoch — peace and happiness for all mankind.

The main threat to world peace today is the continuing arms race. For all honest people solicitous of the future it is clear that an eventual unreasonable use of the accumulated arsenal of weapons might lead the world to a catastrophe, many times greater than the tragedy of all wars known in history, and the consequences of this will be disastrous not only for the present, but also for the future generations.

But we are all profoundly convinced that a real possibility exists now to overcome the main obstacle on the road to disarmament — the counteraction of the imperialist circles. The change in the correlation of forces on the international arena in favour of peace, democracy and socialism marks the new historical setup in which political and material prerequisites are being created for putting an end

to the arms race and for disarmament. Because of their social and political nature, the countries of the socialist community unswervingly and consistently are fighting to exclude war from the life of nations. In favour of disarmament and the establishment of a lasting peace on the earth stands also the movement of the non-aligned countries and the incessantly growing number of far-sighted statesmen and political workers from a great number of countries. The role of the social forces is becoming ever more firmly consolidated as well as that of the world peace movement which insist on the taking of effective measures to remove the impending threat for the peoples of a new world war. We note with satisfaction that at your meetings during these days once again was raised the voice of world public opinion in support of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference. There can be no doubt that if all states and every honest man make their contribution for the further development of the process of easing international tension it will become a lasting all-inclusive and irreversible process.

We are profoundly convinced that with a stopping of the arms race for the achievement of which at present a powerful attack of the peace-loving forces is underway the necessary conditions will be created for an all-round utilisation of scientific and technological progress for the benefit of the peaceful development of nations, for improving the life of all people in the world.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria, together with the other countries of the socialist community and all peace-loving forces, stands firmly for the consolidation of the process of détente, for supplementation with measures in the field of military détente, for a gradual and lasting implementation of one of the dreams of humanity – disarmament. A proof of this are the 6.7 million Bulgarian signatures under the New Stockholm Appeal.

I wish to assure you, dear comrades and friends, that the constructive and humane work of your forum aimed at unity of action by all forces of peace and social progress, at the development and deepening of mutual understanding between nations, at the establishment of a world devoid of wars, of misery and oppression finds a profound response in every Bulgarian heart.

We sincerely believe that the decisions of the Sofia Session of the Presidium of the World Peace Council will contribute for the development of fresh initiatives for consolidating the faith and optimism of nations in the peaceful future of our planet.

Confident in this I wish with all my heart full success to the Session of the Presidium of the World Peace Council.

Role of public opinion is vital

Speech by Romesh Chandra,
Secretary General of World Peace Council
at the opening of the Meeting
of Representatives of Peace Movements of
European Countries

Mr. Chairman and Dear Friends,

This important meeting has begun on a good and high note – the note of peace for the Balkans, peace for the world.

And when this note is sounded in a statement made by one who holds the high office of President of the National Assembly of Bulgaria, it makes us aware of the key significance which Bulgaria attaches to the cause for which we are gathered here.

I would like to express once again our very great gratitude to Mr. Bonev, President of the National Assembly for opening our session here today.

I have been many times to Bulgaria. Many of you have perhaps also been here before. But if you have not, it is worth seeing more of it and more of its people. Here you will find that people are very much for peace but not only for peace, they are for action for peace. And they extend their support to their government to the Communist Party, to the Bulgarian Peace Council in every action which they undertake.

The President of Bulgaria, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, is one, whom we had the privilege of decorating with the highest award of the World Peace Council, the Joliot Curie Medal. Comrade Todor Zhivkov received this medal for this country, for this party, for all the political forces in the country, and for the people of Bulgaria in February 1974 – exactly three years ago, we held a session of our Council here in Sofia, and at that time we said that this medal, which he had been awarded earlier, was shining brightly. I am sure you will agree with me when you have been here a little longer – or perhaps you can agree with me already – that this medal, the highest distinction of the World Peace Council, awarded to Comrade Todor Zhivkov and to Bulgaria, shines even more brightly than before. Its dedication to the cause of peace has brought, during the last few years, more initiatives, more actions by Bulgaria, which have brought many excellent results for the world.

This morning I was reading the introduction to a volume of his speeches and writings which are being published in France by the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev. In the course of this introduction, he writes: "It is not enough to say that we want peace. We want lasting peace. We do not only want it but are doing everything in our power to achieve this goal. And lasting peace is conceivable only as a just democratic and truly universal peace. In other words, a peace based not on the

premise that "might is right", but on the equality and freedom of all peoples and states, big and small, industrially developed and still developing. Such a peace would, of course, accord with the interests of all and at the same time with the interest of each".

These are rather simple words. But I think that if you examine them carefully, this is what the peace movement is all about. We want not only peace, we want a lasting peace. We of the peace movements not only want it, we act to get it.

But what is this peace? Not a peace which is based on the balance of terror or on power and might – over those who do not have power and might. But a peace which is for all, big and small, developing and developed, and a peace which cannot be in the interests of one against all or in the interests of all against one. It has to be a peace in the interests of all and in the interests of each one.

We are here to examine what we believe is the key question before us all – the role of public opinion for the carrying forward and consolidation of the spirit of Helsinki and the Helsinki Final Act.

Public opinion is the power of the peoples. At no time in history has public opinion played as great, effective and decisive a role as it plays today. It exerts itself through the action of the peoples and, let us say quite frankly, in this period it is exerted, above all, through the actions of the World Peace Council, which unites together within it hundreds of millions of men and women from all parts of the globe.

The initiatives of this period taken by the World Peace Council to mobilize public opinion, to bring the power of the peoples into action are many and varied. This public opinion, this power of the peoples, played a vital role in bringing about the Helsinki Final Act. So many events have taken place since then, that sometimes one may forget that there was a period before the signing of the Final Act.

There were many years of struggle, after the socialist countries first put forward their proposals for the calling of a conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Long struggles had to be waged at every point, against those who are opposed to the spirit of détente, to the spirit of peace, against those who oppose cooperation, against those who live by the Cold War, those who live by the profits they make from armaments.

At that time, public opinion in Europe and the world played a vital and decisive role by supporting the efforts of the governments of the Socialist countries and other peace-loving governments, such as those of Finland, and realistic politicians in several countries in Europe, who understood the vital necessity of security and cooperation. It was this public opinion which helped in a decisive way to bring about that historic result – the signing of the Final Act.

Without the actions of public opinion in Europe and in the world, the Helsinki Final Act would not have come about. The role of public opinion was vital and at many moments decisive in bringing about the international climate which resulted in the Helsinki Final Act.

The signing of the Final Act created a still further change in the international atmosphere. It was an event of a kind which has no parallel in history. It brought about a great possibility for successes for peace, for national independence, for

justice and social progress in every corner of the globe.

After this victory, inevitably, some people felt that perhaps public opinion could rest a little while. Nothing of the sort!

Today we can see that those who opposed the Conference at every stage, those who laughed at the Conference when it was being held, and called it a circus, a fiasco, a farce – did not give up their battle when they were defeated by the signing of the Final Act.

They attacked the Conference first by saying it had achieved nothing. Later they said that it gave "advantages" to one side. And then, that in any case it could not be implemented.

And now they have reached another stage: they pretend to support Helsinki, but distort its meaning and act in such a way as to destroy it.

They pretend that they support Helsinki, but they call for more and more armaments.

What are the facts of 1976? The eleven countries of Western Europe which are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation increased their military budgets, during 1976, by five thousand million dollars. The United States of America has a record military budget of 113 thousand million dollars for 1976. Last December, the foreign ministers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation met together and called for a real increase every year, by every country of NATO, in its military expenditure – a cold, clear – cut, solemn demand.

For those who profit from armaments, détente is "all right", provided it does not touch their profits and does not stop them from increasing these profits every year. They spread every kind of lie that they can manufacture to justify the increase of military budgets – against the spirit of every agreement which has been made, against the solemn declarations made by their governments, against the wishes of the vast masses of their peoples, who are facing increasing burdens in their daily lives, increasing difficulties in the attainment of their bread, their employment, their culture, their human rights.

Nothing can hide this reality and no pipe dream should prevent us from understanding the fact that this counter – offensive against the Helsinki Final Act, this counter-offensive against détente has been launched in an unprecedented manner. All types of "arguments" are being advanced to "justify" the increase of military expenditure and with a view to postpone and to prevent any further flowering of the Helsinki Agreements and the Final Act.

In total violation of the Agreement signed in Helsinki, the Final Act was virtually blacked out.

It is strange that governments which have officially published only a handful of copies of the Helsinki Final Act, dare to say that countries which have published the Final Act officially in millions of copies, are not implementing the Final Act.

The people must know what the Final Act contains before they are told that somebody is not implementing it. What right have those who talk about non-implementation to talk off it in countries where the people themselves are prevented from knowing all the terms of the Final Act.

How shall we carry forward the spirit of Helsinki? This is what we are here to discuss. What was agreed in Helsinki was not only that its Final Act should be

implemented in all its terms, but that steps should be taken to carry it forward.

Is it carried forward by increasing military budgets? Is it carried forward by refusing to discuss every proposal which is made for advancing along the road of Helsinki?

In December 1976, the NATO powers called for an increase in armaments and rejected a number of proposals put forward, at the end of November, by the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty. The Warsaw Treaty felt that new proposals should be made, which could strengthen the spirit of Helsinki, particularly in the most important field, that of cutting the arms race.

A proposal was put forward which corresponds to what the peace movements of the world have been demanding for a long time. The Warsaw Treaty Political Consultative Committee suggested that a treaty should be signed by all the thirty-five signatories of the Helsinki Final Act, which would renounce the first use of nuclear weapons against each other. It is a most significant, most useful proposal. Without any discussion it was summarily rejected by the NATO powers.

Did the NATO powers have any other proposals to carry forward the Helsinki spirit, to defuse the dangers of the arms race? None by NATO. All the proposals had been made by the Warsaw Treaty countries. They do not claim any monopoly in making proposals, they look forward to other proposals. They had made a proposal earlier and they repeated it now, for the simultaneous dissolution of the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty; or if not, at least their military parts.

The NATO powers rejected every one of these proposals.

We do not accept that this rejection is a final rejection. Let us not forget that there are great and important political forces in all the countries whose governments are in NATO, including circles inside the governments in certain cases, which are aware of the fact that their people stand for the cutting down of the arms race. And they have to respond to the views of their people.

There have been numerous positive assertions with regard to the halting of the arms race, made during the election campaign in the United States by President Carter. There was his open declaration in favour of cutting down the military budget of the United States. These election pledges are yet to be implemented, but the fact remains that these statements were made, and they were made in response to the tremendous campaigns conducted in the United States, inside the United States Congress itself, for reducing the military budget – in opposition to the vast propaganda machinery set in motion by the armaments profiteers.

And this has compelled those who are anxious to see a change inside their countries, a change in the world, to accept not what NATO demands – an early increase in armaments – but to accept that the only way for the progress of a country like the United States of America or any other country is the cutting down of the military budget in the same way in which countries like the Soviet Union have steadily done over the years.

We hope that following this meeting, the World Peace Council should launch an all-out peoples' offensive for Helsinki, for détente, for the ending of the arms race, a bigger offensive than any launched before.

We are on the eve of the Belgrade meeting. There are efforts to drag this out, to delay it and perhaps even to prevent it from being a success.

These efforts are being made by the same forces which were opposed to the

Helsinki Conference at the time it was held. They were defeated by the united action of all the peace forces, and above all by the action of the peoples.

We meet here at a moment of tremendous importance in the history of Europe and in the history of the world – as important, if not more important, than the period before Helsinki. The need of the hour is a world-wide offensive by world public opinion for the carrying forward of the spirit of Helsinki, for the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, for new initiatives to consolidate Helsinki, for work to make détente an irreversible process.

A great responsibility rests on the peoples of Europe.

But we have never looked upon the question of détente or the question of Helsinki as one which is the sole responsibility of Europe. We have stressed the primary responsibility of Europe, the primary gain for Europe. Europe was proud when the Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975. Europe, which had been the continent from which two world wars had started has now become the continent in which the greatest and most important document for universal détente has been signed.

Therefore, the responsibility today for this new offensive of world public opinion rests in the first place on the peoples of Europe; but it rests equally on all peoples. Helsinki has opened the door for the solution of every problem facing mankind; at the same time every victory of the peoples has strengthened the spirit of Helsinki.

Therefore, the safeguarding of the Helsinki agreements, consolidating them, putting an end to the efforts of the enemies of détente, are of vital significance for the struggles of every people for the building of a new life. And every struggle for the building of a new life is today part of this world-wide offensive of public opinion for Helsinki.

How can you speak of security and cooperation in Europe if you do not speak about a small European country called Cyprus. Is it so small, is it not large enough to be considered when discussing the big questions of European security. The Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty countries pointed out, at the end of November, the vital connection which exists between the struggle for Cyprus, against the conspiracies which are directed towards the destruction of Cyprus, and the cause of security and cooperation in Europe.

But it is not only a question of Cyprus, not only a question of the military bases in the Mediterranean which threaten everyone.

There are questions of the Middle East, of the independence of Southern Africa, the struggle of the developing countries, the battle against fascism in Chile and other countries of Latin America. All these are inextricably linked with the struggle for Helsinki. And if we try to separate these artificially, we will not succeed, we will not be understood by the peoples of the world.

What we seek to discuss in this meeting and later on in the Presidential Committee meeting is not only the question of European public opinion and the Helsinki Final Act, but world public opinion, the power of the peoples of the world, and the Final Act.

We shall have occasion to discuss each of these problems and their relationship with the Helsinki Final Act in great detail during this meeting. It is not an accident that the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council, composed of

representatives from all the continents, will discuss this question as the most important issue before it at this time. For it is of importance for all peoples.

We believe that we can build up that force of world public opinion, which won victories at the time of Helsinki, and which can also win now.

What is the strength of the World Peace Council? Its greatest strength lies in its capacity to ensure that we can act together, despite very sharp differences of opinion, on one problem or another. Our strength lies in the fact that we can unite on these most important questions.

There are people who feel that questions which disunite us are very important. Each one can and should maintain his or her opinions whatever they might be. But let us understand that at this time the need is for the unity of all peace forces in the world against the enemies of détente, against the cold warriors, who would like to bring back those days which we think we have left behind.

The forces of imperialism and aggression — these forces are our common enemies. We must not be diverted from our struggle against these enemies into actions which can only help and strengthen our enemies consciously or unconsciously.

When we say that the World Peace Council has the capacity to bring the force of public opinion into play, we say so above all because the World Peace Council and all the national organisations which are composed of representatives of political parties, trade unions, religious people, people holding very different points of view — are able to unite on the most important questions, leaving to each one to speak in his own country or elsewhere on the points which may divide us.

We believe that today our aim is to launch a united world-wide offensive of all peoples for the implementation, consolidation and carrying forward of the Helsinki Final Act...

In our meetings we shall be guided always by the spirit which has been the main characteristic of the World Peace Council, the characteristic which I think was so brilliantly explained by Comrade Leonid Brezhnev in the words I read out to you earlier.

May I end with a quotation from one who has guided us since the days the World Peace Council was born. It is one which we quote all the time, and whenever we find some difficulty in understanding what the World Peace Council is about, we come back to it.

Joliot Curie, great founder of our Movement, said: you cannot, in one country alone, or through the action of one people alone, fight back the forces of aggression and war and prevent war. But you can if all the countries of the world and all the peoples of the world, work together and fight together against these forces.

This is the spirit which guides all our national peace movements. We do not try to impose the points of view of one country or of two countries or of three countries on others. We are all proud of our own point of view. But we are aware that the most important thing at this moment is the unity of the peace forces. This means, first of all, the united action of the World Peace Council.

Today we need that unity of the peace forces even more perhaps than before the Helsinki Final Act. Because, make no mistake, the counter-offensive of the

cold warriors is not just one more counter-offensive. It is counter-offensive which is dangerous – I have given you the figures in regard to armaments – and must be seen as dangerous. Yet it is a counter-offensive, which cannot succeed: it can and will be defeated by the power of the peoples.

Together we can do this. Separately – we cannot.

One year before Helsinki we said: Helsinki is going to take place, and it is going to be a success. Some people then would laugh and say that we were living in a fool's paradise.

And today also we say: we shall go forward. The generals of NATO have rejected the Warsaw Treaty proposals, but the peoples have not rejected these proposals – they support them, they work for more concrete steps to end the present terrible intensification of the arms race.

We are full of confidence and optimism. We belong to the peoples of the world who are winning ever new victories. We shall certainly be successful.

This meeting has a great historic task. We can accomplish it.

The peoples have the power. Let this power be put into action as never before.



General view of the building where the WPC Presidential Committee meeting was held in Sofia.

Romesh Chandra, Secretary General of the World Peace Council delivering his speech.



Georgi Dimitrov-Goshkin, President of the National Peace Committee of the Peoples Republic of Bulgaria.



Canon Raymond Goor at the opening session.

Mr. Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, with members of the World Peace Council Bureau.





Mr. Pentcho Kubadinski, member of the Political Bureau of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of Bulgaria's Fatherland Front with representatives of the WPC Presidential Committee.

Gordon Schaffer and Dr. Cheddi

Members of the Greek delegation during a break of the session.



Helsinki Final Act is a banner of security and co-operation among nations

Speech by Mr. Romesh Chandra,
Secretary General of the World Peace Council at the
inaugural session of the WPC Presidential Committee

Mr. President, Dear Friends,

We have begun the work of this important session of the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council by paying homage to the memory of Georghy Dimitrov. For us of different countries of the world, the name Dimitrov stands for all the good things for which we strive.

Dimitrov was dedicated to the cause for which we stand. And today, as the peace movement grows, one can look back at what he said at a different time, in different circumstances, for the words are very relevant for our work today.

Gheorghy Dimitrov in 1935, when we were fighting against the dangers of fascism, the second world war, said:

"We need a front of peace, which will spread over all parts of the world, from Tokyo to London, from New York to Berlin. We must encircle the globe with such a network of the friends of peace, with such a powerful movement of international solidarity, with such active initiatives of united international proletarian policy in the interests of peace, that it will be possible to stay the criminal hand of the war mongers".

That was said a long time ago. But if you look back at the foundations of the Peace Movement in 1949, and even more if you look at the Peace Movement of today, you will find that what we have been trying to do since 1949 is precisely this: to build a front of peace, to encircle the globe with a network of organisations of the friends of peace, of vast movements of international solidarity.

How much has been achieved in these years! How different is the situation today from what it was in 1935! The situation is different because the balance of forces in the world has changed, and we are moving forward, and it is the policies of peace, of peaceful coexistence, of international détente which are decisive and which have become the main trends in international affairs.

Today our task is not only to defend the peace, not only to stay the hand of those who would try to bring back the cold war and even the hot war. We need that network of peace also for the purpose of building the new world which we all seek.

The peace movement has changed in character. In several countries, the Peace Movement in the recent period has more and more begun to resemble that kind of

front – that type of united body, which embraces all who love their country, who stand against imperialism and fascism, and that means the vast majority of the peoples in each country.

The Peace Movement inside each of several countries has changed in character to become increasingly that type of united front of those who stand for the building of their country. Then it was a united front to halt the onslaught of fascism and war, now it is a united front to defend the peace, to consolidate détente and to march forward to the building of a new world.

We have been honoured today by having our session opened through a message from the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Bulgaria, the President of Bulgaria, Comrade Todor Zhivkov. He has referred to our last meeting, the meeting of our Council three years ago. He said, at that time, speaking of the World Peace Council, that it is and has become "the generally acknowledged vanguard of the peoples in their strivings and struggles for peace."

Comrade Zhivkov said further that "the power of attraction of the World Peace Movement grows with each succeeding day and it is becoming ever more difficult for the fomenters of new wars to oppose this force". In the three years, which have passed since then, the power of attraction of the World Peace Movement has grown, as he said, with every succeeding day, and we meet today, when we can say that with the inspiration that that session in Sofia three years ago gave us, we have – each in our own way and all together – striven to become worthy of the faith and the confidence which the peoples of the world have in the World Peace Council. Comrade Zhivkov said at that time: "May the ranks of your Movement, whose aims are the noblest and the most human of our time, multiply".

We are now approaching the next session of the World Peace Council, when we shall re-constitute our Council. Our ranks have multiplied and will multiply, and Comrade Zhivkov's good wishes for our success and for our growth, have come true.

The World Peace Movement today is a movement of a totally different character from what it was twenty-five years ago. The new period of détente brings with it new tasks, and it is these new tasks which allow us to call ourselves builders of peace.

The change is also in regard to the composition of the World Peace Council. May our ranks multiply, as Comrade Zhivkov said. Our ranks have multiplied because, in each national movement, efforts have been made in the spirit in which the World Peace Council works. The most diverse political forces have been able to come together and join the World Peace Council. No longer can it be said that certain political parties stay aloof from the World Peace Movement or the national peace movements.

We have taken during the last two days a look at Europe and at the national peace movements in Europe, and in each case we can see that change that has taken place in the membership of the World Peace Council, changes which began with the Sofia session, but which are very much more marked today. The most diverse political parties come together today for the purpose of working for peace and working in the World Peace Council.

We have been discussing here the whole development of this movement. Great

actions, greater than at any time before in the history of mankind's struggle for peace, took place when the Movement began, a round the Stockholm Appeal, in 1950. Later there was the great mass movement against the Vietnam war. Today a mighty movement is developing a round the New Stockholm Appeal. There are vast movements of solidarity with Chile, with Palestine, with the Arab Peoples fighting for peace and justice, with the struggle for liberation in Southern Africa. We have above all, been part of the wide movement of the peoples which played such a vital role in bringing about that great step for peace, for independence, for justice, for social progress – the Helsinki Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Too often there is a tendency to think that the Helsinki Final Act was made in Europe, made only by Europe, made only for Europe. That is true, but only partially. For the Europe from which the two great world wars came, the Europe from which the armies of colonialism were sent, the Europe from which death has marched in the form of the hunger of our peoples in so many other parts of the world – that Europe began to be looked upon, after the Helsinki Conference not only as the continent which produced wars, colonialism, death and destruction, not only as the Europe of the fascists and colonialists, but as a Europe from which peace and détente and the greatest steps for peace and détente can be taken and have been taken. There are those whom I would call the Euro-Maniacs who would like to say: in the past we were dominant in the world – the British Empire was one on which the sun never set – and now too we shall be dominant in new ways.

Let us look back at the Helsinki Conference and its results. A key and vital role was played by the peoples of Europe. Of that there is no doubt. But be clear: Helsinki and its Final Act could not have been possible without the vast contributions made by the peoples of the whole world to the bringing about of détente, to the change in the balance of forces in the world.

Helsinki, this great chapter, the highest point which we have reached in the struggle for détente, also came about as a result of the great contribution of all peoples, all continents, to peace, independence, justice and social progress.

The truth is that Vietnam played a vital role for détente. The truth is that Helsinki came about also through the glorious contribution of Vietnam. And when I say Vietnam, I mean the struggle of all peoples for peace, for justice, for independence.

Therefore, we, from all corners of the world are part of the Helsinki Agreement. The Final Act was signed by thirty-three states of Europe and by the United States and Canada. But it came about because of the creation of and the existence of this new climate in the whole world.

And therefore, our Peace Movement and the peace forces in the world have never looked upon the Helsinki Final Act as something which has come about solely as a result of the efforts of the peoples of Europe.

Helsinki was born, yes, first through the struggle of the peoples of Europe, but, at the same time, it would not have been possible without the change which was brought about through the struggles of all the peoples of the world, of all those who stood in the front lines of the fight for freedom, the fight for independence, the fight against war, the fight against imperialism and fascism

everywhere.

This reality of our time is a reality which does not require to be underlined in a meeting of the Presidential Committee of the World Peace Council. The European countries must cooperate among themselves, for a Europe at peace is vital for the world. But the struggle for European security and cooperation, as we understand it, is part of the whole world-wide struggle.

It is not Europe against the world, it is Europe with the world, Europe for the world.

If Helsinki owed so much to the struggles of all the peoples of all continents for the creation of the new climate in the world, for the change in the balance of powers in the world, let us emphasise also that Helsinki itself opens the door to the strengthening of the struggles of all peoples. If we discuss Helsinki only in the confines of Europe, we will do injustice to the architects of the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act.

Helsinki opens the door to new advances in Europe, to the stopping of the arms race and to disarmament in Europe, to cooperation in Europe, for the betterment of the living standards of the ordinary people in Europe.

All this is vital for the rest of the world, because of the importance of Europe.

But at the same time, Helsinki has created favourable new conditions for the struggles of every people. Just as the struggle of every people contributed to and helped the struggle of the peoples of Europe to build the Helsinki spirit, so today in turn, the Helsinki spirit and the victories of Europe create new possibilities, new favourable conditions for the advance of every people fighting for a new life, fighting against imperialism, fascism, against oppression, against injustice.

There is an inextricable link between the tasks of the peoples of Europe for consolidating Helsinki and the struggles of all the developing countries to take with their hands their natural resources, for ending hunger and poverty, for attaining their economic independence, for ridding themselves of oppression.

There is an inextricable link between the struggle of the peoples of Europe for the consolidation of Helsinki and the struggle of the Arab peoples for peace and justice in the Middle East, the battles of the Palestine people for their inalienable rights, including their right to establish their own state.

The Helsinki spirit has provided us with new conditions for marching forward to victories in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Cyprus, is part of Europe. But Cyprus is a vital question for the world. And when we discuss Cyprus we see its connection with European security and the Final Act, we see its connection also with the Middle East, with the problems of the Mediterranean, with the problems of Africa, with the problems of Asia. Cyprus is a bridge, which connects in a way the problems of Europe and the problems of the Middle East, the problems of Africa and Asia.

We need to see these links clearly so that we are able to draw the correct lessons of the Helsinki Conference and its Final Act for our own struggles. The strengthening of the struggle in Europe strengthens the struggle everywhere else. Equally the strengthening of the struggles on other continents strengthens the struggle in Europe.

Détente is not a continental product, it is not a tree which grows on one

continent and does not grow in the rest of the world.

The movement we seek to build at this time, when we are on the eve of the Belgrade Conference, is a series of world-wide actions for the intensification of the struggles for peace, independence, justice and social progress, for the consolidation of Helsinki, for the success of the Belgrade meetings.

The opponents of the Helsinki spirit, the enemies of détente, those who try to bring the cold war back are the same forces which are responsible for the aggression in the Middle East, for preventing a peaceful solution in the Middle East, for denying the Palestinian people their rights. They are the same forces which are responsible for maintaining and keeping alive the hated colonialist and racist regimes in Southern Africa. They are the same forces which are today, in the Far East, preparing to launch a new aggression in Korea and to permanently split Korea, to prevent the great aspirations of the people of Korea which are embodied in the recent Appeal made by the political forces in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, on the 25th January, to all the patriotic forces of the South.

The same anti-détente, anti-Helsinki forces are responsible for creating each and all of these situations. They are responsible for the spread of imperialist military bases, for the stepping up of the arms race, for pouring arms into different parts of the world to create tension.

One of the finest characteristics of the World Peace Council is precisely this: that it sees the links and tries to work out together the links between the struggles in every part of the world with the struggles in the rest of the world.

To fight for Chile is to fight not for Chile alone, but to fight for all of us. We have to prevent the onward march of fascism in so many countries of Latin America, Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua. But is that a problem for Latin America alone and not a problem for the world? This struggle is inextricably linked with our struggles in Asia, Africa and above all, with the struggle in Europe.

The struggle for independence contributes vitally to the struggle for ending the arms race and for disarmament, just as equally the struggle to end the arms race is vital for the struggle for independence. We do not say: wait till there is disarmament, and then we shall all be independent and free. Nor do we express the other totally false idea that until every country is free, there cannot be a struggle for disarmament, there cannot be advance towards disarmament. These false notions have been combatted effectively, and there is a deep understanding of the relationship of these and other questions among the vast masses of our people.

This session deals with the question of Helsinki and the Final Act, and the role of world public opinion.

We approach this question with great confidence, with optimism. We have looked at it also with realism. We have refused to blind ourselves to the fact that the enemies of détente – the enemies of peace, the enemies of development, the enemies of national independence – are counter-attacking today in a more sinister way than ever before the entire concept of détente which was embodied in the Helsinki Final Act.

A principal target of the world-wide propaganda campaign of the enemies of

détente, the cold warriors, these common enemies of mankind — is precisely the Helsinki Final Act. And this attack is not carried out in the same way as it was before. It is not waged in the same way as during the Helsinki Conference, or at the time of the first anniversary of Helsinki, several months ago.

In these last months an attempt is being made to create an atmosphere which would weaken the Helsinki spirit.

The campaign today about the so-called "military threat" of the Soviet Union is a campaign which, as we know, is meant to provide the "argument" for increasing military budgets in certain countries of the West. But it has another purpose, too, and it is to this that I would like to draw the attention of all countries.

The purpose of this campaign of the anti-détente forces is also to confuse public opinion in the non-aligned countries. The aim is to create the impression that there is an arms race for which "two sides" are responsible. Behind this screen of falsehoods, arms on a massive scale are being poured by imperialism, above all, by the United States armaments profiteers, into certain countries. Some of these countries are now acting as gendarmes of imperialism. Others, as a result of these arms supplies are becoming more and more dependent on imperialism, and their march towards economic independence is slowed down.

We must make no mistake about the purpose of this campaign of the anti-Helsinki forces. The campaign is directed these days especially against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. The anti-détente forces pretend that they are very concerned about this so-called "third basket" and human rights, while others stress the importance of the other "baskets".

The forces of imperialism, the enemies of détente are not concerned about this "third basket". What belief have they in human rights? I am not talking about some honest people who might be honestly confused about these questions. But the propagandists utter falsehoods when they say that they are "concerned" about the "third basket".

Where has the "third basket" been better implemented than under socialism? Have the unemployed, who are increasing in millions in the capitalist world, human rights? Is racism, which is dominant in so many of these countries, human rights? And do human rights not require to guarantee for every man the right to work? Do human rights not mean the right of every man to take part in the framing and the building of socialism?

The purpose of this campaign is to justify the unjustifiable, to turn the eyes of people in Western Europe away from the main task of fighting inflation and fighting that which creates inflation and to prevent them from coming to the conclusions to which they are coming, that they cannot exercise the ordinary human right to eat and to work unless they change and transform society.

This campaign equally aims at diverting attention from the main issues of human rights in the world, by suggesting that everywhere the governments are depriving people of human rights, even in the socialist countries, in this country and in that country. These lies suggest that "every government is bad, some may be worse, some may be better".

What is the aim of these efforts? It is, for instance, to create the impression that the torture and terror in Chile is only part of what is a universal

phenomenon, only it may be a little worse in Chile!

Is the torture in Chile only a little worse than in other countries? The anti-Soviet campaign is intended to weaken the world-wide solidarity movement with the victims of the crimes against humanity in the countries under fascist and neo-fascist regimes.

I was born in a period which we can call the period of the October Revolution, in the decade after the October Revolution changed the world.

My people, with whom I fought for independence gained so much from the October Revolution. They gained in inspiration, they gained in support. And today my people would be destroyed, would lose its independence were it not for our own heroic struggle, of course, first and foremost, but also because we have the unconditional solidarity of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

Millions of people all over the world – particularly the peoples of the developing non-aligned countries – rightly see the anti-Soviet psychological warfare being conducted by the forces of reaction as a sinister manoeuvre directed at weakening the unity of peace forces, at dividing the non-aligned countries from their best friends, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

We are confident of the success of this session of our Presidential Committee, which deals with this key world issue – that of public opinion and the Helsinki Final Act.

Helsinki is a banner, around which all who seek to make détente irreversible, all who work for peace, independence, democracy, justice and social progress can gather.

Message of greetings

to the participants in the Continental Meeting of the peace movements from the European countries, the USA and Canada pronounced by Comrade Vladimir Bonev, Member of the Secretariat of the CC of the BCP and President of the Bureau of the National Assembly

Honourable participants in the Meeting,

Dear Guests,

It is with a feeling of great pleasure that I am fulfilling the pleasant duty to address you, outstanding representatives of political parties, Parliaments, public organisations and movements, scientists, cultural and religious workers gathered in Sofia, the capital of socialist Bulgaria, to discuss the situation in Europe and to try to find ways and means of mobilizing European public opinion for the purpose of overcoming the hindrances and difficulties along the road of the development of cooperation and understanding among the European peoples. It is a high honour for me to convey to you most cordial greetings on behalf of the Bulgarian Parliament and on behalf of the builders of an advanced socialist society in the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

This Meeting takes place a year and nine months after the remarkable event in the life of the European peoples and in international life – the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The road travelled since, though short, makes it possible for us to evaluate the tremendous and multilateral significance of this historic event, to analyse the problems and difficulties in connection with the application of the coordinated principles of the Final Act, to outline the most appropriate forms and means of achieving the mapped out goals. In fact with this document the page of the post-war period was closed and new prospects were opened up for our old continent and an example was given which can be followed by yet other regions in the world. That is why the Final Act of Helsinki was justly evaluated by progressive world public opinion as a farreaching and clear platform for action in favour of peace and cooperation in Europe, valid for many years and even decades ahead.

We can note with satisfaction that the ranks of those who are sincerely striving for détente and for the realisation of the agreements reached are steadily increasing. Under the impact of the struggle of the Communist and Workers' Parties, of all democratic forces the traces from the period of the "cold war" are being gradually overcome and the principles of peaceful coexistence among countries with different social structures are becoming evermore strongly consolidated.

As in the process of preparation of the European Conference, so also in the implementation of its decisions, a leading place is held by the socialist countries, and above all, by the Soviet Union. With their activity and initiatives, with their readiness to follow firmly the path marked out in Helsinki, the socialist countries give an example of a consistent and highly principled foreign policy, at the basis of which lie Lenin's undying ideas of peace, peaceful coexistence and cooperation among nations.

It is to be regretted that in Europe and in the world there are influential forces to whom progress in détente on our continent is not to their liking. They have started a campaign of "anti-détente", of disinformation and slander against the socialist countries and in every way hinder the struggle for putting an end to the arms race. This race makes use of tremendous material and human resources for military purposes instead of placing them in the service of economic and social progress of nations, and undermines the foundations of peace.

It can be noted with gratification that ever wider circles of European public opinion realise that the process of détente and the arms race are incompatible and cannot develop parallelly for a long time. Every new step in intensifying the arms race provokes opposing efforts, diminishes confidence between states, increases the number of risks and conflicts. It is appropriate in this connection to recall the words of Leonid Ilich Brezhnev, pronounced in his message of greetings to the World Meeting of Peace in Moscow that "the arms race is a fruitless squandering of mankind's material and cultural wealth of which it is in such great need in order to fight against hunger, disease, illiteracy and to solve its social, power, raw material and ecological problems."

The European nations are faced today with the exceedingly important task: to consolidate the successes achieved, to overcome the hindrances and difficulties, to turn détente into an all-embracing, lasting and irreversible process.

In the name of this great goal the People's Republic of Bulgaria and all the Bulgarian people are making their constructive contribution. Together with the peoples from the socialist and other peaceful countries, with the progressive and democratic forces in the whole world our people are wholeheartedly taking part in the struggle for peace, cooperation and understanding, for freedom and independence of nations, for social progress. With her consistent peaceful foreign policy the People's Republic of Bulgaria is doing everything within her possibilities for the fullest possible implementation of the decisions of the Helsinki Conference.

Our country devotes particular attention to the development of goodneighbourly relations and cooperation with her Balkan neighbours for the creation of an atmosphere of security and confidence among the Balkan nations. This has been an unswerving Bulgarian policy. As the First Secretary of the CC of the BCP and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria Comrade Todor Zhivkov said: "...The people's Republic of Bulgaria will remain also in future true to her principled and constructive peaceful policy in the Balkans, a policy which is not influenced by conjunctural considerations. We shall continue to work consistently to transform the Balkans into a region of goodneighbourliness, understanding and cooperation. Let the obscure past of

enmity and bloody wars between the Balkan states be forever relegated to the museum of history."

On behalf of the National Assembly, the supreme body of people's rule in the People's Republic of Bulgaria, on behalf of the President of the State Council, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, I wish to assure you, dear participants in the Meeting, that our country, the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Government, as well as all our peaceful people will continue in the future to support all international initiatives aimed at putting an end to the arms race, banning nuclear arms and all other weapons for mass destruction, at abandoning the use of force in international relations, at complete and general disarmament. The National Assembly, the State Council and the Government will continue to devote particularly great attention to the incessant development of cooperation with all nations, and will cooperate for the peaceful political solution of all disputes and conflicts.

I am convinced that Bulgarian public opinion, all Bulgarian people who are following with tremendous interest the work of your meeting will express their unreserved readiness to cooperate for their implementation, in order to raise still higher the voice of the peaceful forces for transforming our old Europe into a continent of lasting peace and mutually advantageous cooperation, for peace in the whole world.

I wholeheartedly wish you successful and fruitful work.

Document on World Public Opinion and Helsinki Final Act

Throughout all its activities the World Peace Council has always stressed the decisive role of world public opinion and it has energetically worked to promote its growth, its articulation and the scale of its influence. The World Peace Council itself, the national peace committees and movements working in 125 countries on all continents, are an expression of world public opinion which has taken form to fulfil the declared will of the people for peace, détente, disarmament and a secure future for mankind.

The world is now seeing a reshaping of international relations in accordance with peaceful coexistence. We are witnesses to the coming into being of a new logic of historic evolution which is directed not towards war but moves away from a threat of war towards détente, in the direction of consolidation of security and cooperation between peoples, between states irrespective of their social and political orders. This is a victory of human reason.

In the sphere of international relations we see the growth of truly universal and fundamental interests and objectives which, particularly under the conditions of détente, can and must be achieved. The first important objective undoubtedly is to free mankind from the threat of another world war. Thus, life itself raises the vital issue of genuine disarmament. At the same time there is a chance of establishing the most favourable external conditions for social and economic progress for all the peoples, and of solving the problems of food and of raw material supplies and of satisfying energy requirements. There also is a chance of promoting the democratisation of international economic relations, and the setting up a new international economic and social order.

On the road towards peace and more effective détente everything now depends upon increasing the security of the peoples of Europe and upon extending cooperation between the different states on the European continent.

Europe has set the world the tremendous examples of the agreement signed in Helsinki. The results of the Conference on European Security and Cooperation have put the necessary political termination to the consequences of the Second World War by recognising certain situations resulting from it.

These results have opened up new prospects of conducting the affairs between states in a way favourable to all. They make possible the search for and the carrying out of new methods and new types of international relations. Therefore, thanks to the conference, Europe today can reach a substantially higher level of security and cooperation.

Agreement in Helsinki was reached not because some participants have imposed their concepts on others, but because the general consensus was reached on the basis of the opinions and the interests of all. Therefore, great importance

attaches to the implementation – both to the letter and to the spirit – of all clauses of the Final Act which constitutes a unified and indivisible code of practice of peaceful international relations and cooperation.

Concrete applications of the Final Act are already to be found in various fields and at various levels – national, bilateral and multilateral.

The world peace movement has made a considerable contribution towards establishing a climate favourable to the success of the Helsinki Conference. The forces of peace take a profound interest in guaranteeing that budding détente shall not be trampled underfoot, but that it grows into an imposing tree of peace.

This being the prospect, the forces of peace nevertheless must not forget that in Europe there continue to be concentrated the most powerful military forces, including nuclear weapons.

We therefore direct the attention of world public opinion to the dangerous activities of the enemies of détente who lately have stepped up their attempts to undermine détente.

The enemies of peace and cooperation among the peoples, the representatives of the military-industrial complexes of various countries, the forces of reaction have essentially concentrated on two points. Firstly, there is a provocative and noisy campaign about a so-called Soviet military threat. This aims to justify the demands for increases in already excessive military budgets, and for still more extended production of war material. But the peoples will not be deceived. They will not tolerate attempts which might lead to a return to the cold war and to a still more expensive and dangerous arms race. The peoples of the world realize that the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have never ceased to propose measures for arms limitation and that they are among those forces fighting for a just and lasting peace.

Secondly- the activities of those reactionary elements who are against détente consist in a tendentious interpretation of certain issues from the "third basket" and of related topics. Those who instigate this campaign and who interfere in internal affairs are attempting to destroy the climate established by the Helsinki Conference. This climate has created particularly favourable conditions for the exchange and the contesting of ideas free from the possibility of a psychological war developing which would be fraught with the danger of explosion. Such negative attempts are all the more dangerous since they are made on the eve of a new European meeting which is scheduled to be held in Belgrade this year, in accordance with the Final Act. This meeting will further strengthen and promote the agreements arrived at in Helsinki. These attempts carry the risk of poisoning the international atmosphere and relegating to the background the important issues which directly decide the improvement of mutual understanding, the consolidation of peace and security of the peoples.

At the present time everything depends upon achieving great and tangible successes in the field of military détente and on carrying out concrete disarmament measures to complement and enrich political détente. It is necessary, as demanded in the New Stockholm Appeal, to end the arms race and follow the road to disarmament.

Time is short. The forces of peace can hope for and demand the immediate application of existing and the working out of new agreements on the limitation

of strategic weapons. These agreements are and will be important for the world at large. From this aspect, a successful continuation of the SALT talks, in progress between the Soviet Union and the United States, is of particular importance. The Vienna talks on the questions of a reduction of arms and armed forces in Central Europe are of major importance. European public opinion demands that these talks which are of great relevance for the destinies of our continent and world peace be not deadlocked but rather be led to positive results. If all the participants in the Vienna negotiations respect the interests of mutual security without trying to gain unilateral advantages, such results may be reached in a very short time.

The forces of peace must not overlook that, encouraged by the forces of NATO and despite repeated appeals by the United Nations, violations of the independence, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus by a signatory of the Final Act continue. Equally, they cannot pass over other on-going situations which still cause concern to some European states and which negatively affect European security:

- the violation of fundamental human rights in Northern Ireland;
- the fascist activities and the danger of a resurgence of neofascism;
- the threats to the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin.

Public opinion has contributed greatly to the success of the Helsinki agreement; now, it is called upon to do its share for the success of the Belgrade meetings which by adopting a concrete programme of action will open up a new stage on the road towards European security and détente.

That is the way the World Peace Council appeals to the peace forces of Europe and all the world to do everything in their power :

- strictly to observe and completely carry out the principles and clauses of the Helsinki Final Act in its entirety;
- to end the arms race, to ban nuclear armament by renouncing the use of force in international relations and in so doing to achieve general and complete disarmament; and primarily nuclear disarmament;
- to work for a dissolution of military blocs;
- to achieve strict control on the non-proliferation of nuclear arms and not to tolerate the passing on to non-nuclear countries of resources which would enable them to produce their own nuclear arms. This, however, must not prejudice their access to nuclear energy to be used for peaceful purposes under strict control of international conventions;
- to ensure that all countries who participated in the Helsinki Conference adopt an agreement not to be the first to use nuclear arms against each other;
- to extend mutually advantageous economic, technological and scientific cooperation between the countries and at the level of the continent, as a whole; to remove barriers discriminatory to international cooperation, to the social, economic and political welfare of peoples;
- to develop exchanges and mutual cooperation in the fields of culture, art and information, so as to bring peoples closer together; and to build mutual respect and confidence without interfering in the internal affairs of others; to guarantee democratic freedoms as well as the economic and social rights of man;

- to support certain international initiatives: a special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament as a step leading to the World Disarmament Conference; the convening of an international conference on Cyprus under UN auspices; the holding of a Conference on Security in the Mediterranean region.

The implementation of these objectives will be vital to the future not only of Europe but of the world at large to which Europe is closely linked by cultural, as well as social, economic and political ties.

Therefore, the World Peace Council launches an urgent appeal to the political and social forces of the continent and in particular to the International Committee for European Security and Cooperation to unite all efforts with the aim of successfully implementing this comprehensive and promising programme of action.

Appeal for the World Assembly of Builders of Peace

The meeting of the International Preparatory Committee in Sofia, on February 13 and 14 adopted the following Appeal Concerning the World Assembly of Builders of Peace:

"The victories won by the forces of peace and détente in recent times have created a new climate in international relations. A new optimism and fresh energy have been generated among world public opinion. Hopes for the final elimination of war and aggression from international life have strengthened.

To further mobilise world public opinion and give expression to this new situation, the World Peace Council in cooperation with numerous international, regional and national non-governmental organisations who have joined to form the International Preparatory Committee, is convening a **WORLD ASSEMBLY OF BUILDERS OF PEACE** in Warsaw from May 6 to 11, 1977.

Thanks to the power of broad mass movements, to common action, to the dialogues and cooperation undertaken between different political and social forces, international governmental and non-governmental organisations, at the national and international levels, have achieved a great deal. These activities contributed to the positive outcome of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the acceptance of the principles of relations between States, contained in the Final Act. World public opinion and the peace movements have played a decisive role in bringing about the United Nations decisions on the need for a New International Economic Order and international recognition of the peoples' rights to full sovereignty over the riches of their own soil.

In this spirit, the World Peace Council and the International Preparatory Committee call upon national peace movements all over the world, upon political parties, trade unions, women's and youth organisations, religious, social and cultural bodies, upon leading figures, to join in a world-wide dialogue on ways to consolidate and strengthen détente, at the Warsaw Assembly.

The struggle for full implementation and adherence to the principles adopted during the Helsinki Summit and implementation of decisions on the New International Economic Order would further strengthen the positive chance and processes of détente and would help in finding solutions to many difficult issues facing humanity: economic backwardness, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental protection and others.

Public opinion has the power to secure their implementation.

The continuation of the arms race, intensified by the imperialists is the principal obstacle to further consolidation of the processes of détente and incites and encourages the forces of aggression, militarism and fascism, colonialism and racism.

The ending of the arms race, prohibition of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, renunciation of the use of force in international relations, general and complete disarmament, would greatly consolidate the process of détente and help to make it irreversible. It would show that the peoples had taken a decisive step towards shaping and building a new world.

Further consolidation and development of the processes of détente on the other hand, would be vital factors in strengthening efforts in all countries for national independence, justice and social progress.

World public opinion has greater responsibilities and also greater power than ever before. Unity of action by all these movements, irrespective of differing programmes and policies, has resulted in successes in the past and is a guarantee that obstacles which still remain along the road towards a new world, free from the fear of nuclear annihilation and the arms race, free from aggression, exploitation and domination, free from hunger and poverty, will be removed for ever.

"DIALOGUE", "MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING", "COOPERATION" and "UNITY OF ACTION" – under these slogans the World Peace Council and the International Preparatory Committee convene the Assembly and invite you to participate in its preparation at local, national, regional, continental and international levels. All peoples are today expressing the desire to find a way forward, to build a new world – the Assembly will advance this aim. It will be a Parliament of Defenders and Builders of Peace.

Warsaw, the city reborn from the ashes of war, the city which symbolises peace, will be happy to welcome representatives of all countries and continents who seek to build a world without war, a world of security, development, social justice and peaceful cooperation."

Joliot-Curie Medal to world leaders

The WPC Presidential Committee meeting in Sofia decided to award the World Peace Council's highest award, the Joliot-Curie Medal to:

- Mr. Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile;
 - Mr. Oliver Tambo, Chairman of the African National Congress of South Africa;
 - Mr. Sam Nujoma, Chairman of the South-West African People's Organisation; and
 - Mr. Joshua Nkomo, Chairman of the African National Council of Zimbabwe.
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