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Report of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [F. Somogyi] for the Council of Ministers about the Meeting of the leaders of the Warsaw Pact on 4 December

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Summary:

Summary of the meeting of the leaders of the Warsaw Pact. The document is not signed, but it is highly likely it was authorized by Ferenc Somogyi, Deputy Minister of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who was present at the meeting in Moscow.

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- English Translation

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Report to the [Hungarian] Council of Ministers on the Warsaw Treaty [WT] country leaders' conference.

On December 4, 1989, at Soviet initiative, the leaders of the Warsaw Treaty countries met in Moscow. On the conference, which was called in order to give information on Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Italy and the Vatican, as well as on his talks with the American President George Bush, the participants of the conference from Hungary were Rezső Nyers, president of the MSZP [Hungarian Socialist Party] and Prime Minister Miklós Németh. (See list of participants in the attachment.)

In his introduction, M. Gorbachev attached great significance to the meeting in Moscow which in his evaluation demonstrated the strengthening of the alliance connections [as well as] the continuity of the cooperation among the WT countries. He stressed the necessity of making [mutual] contacts on different levels inside the [Warsaw Treaty] alliance system even more frequent. He was expounding that amid the changes that had ensued in our countries, mutual exchange of information and thus avoiding misunderstanding is even more indispensable. Referring to the experiences of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, he pointed out that the dilatory political reactions to the new developments in certain cases led to such extraordinary situations that handling the [political] processes became difficult or even impossible.

Regarding his negotiations in Italy, M. Gorbachev spoke highly of Italy's constructive role in Europe, and also of the fact that this country was among the first appearing on the Soviet market with significant economic projects. Assessing his present talks as a success beyond all expectations, M. Gorbachev emphasized the utilization of military capacities for civil purposes [e.g. making the military sector produce consumer goods], the fight against drug addiction and environmental protection as [three] fields that offer themselves as new [prospective] cooperation possibilities. At the same time he mentioned that on the Italian side the slow tempo of the Soviet economic transformation and bureaucracy are seen as the [two] biggest obstacles in the [way of] expanding wide-ranging cooperation. He drew attention to the operational experiences of the [Italian] state sector which plays a significant role in the Italian economy, and thus it could be utilized in our countries too.

Speaking about his unusually long, [and] substantive talks with Pope John Paul II, M. Gorbachev stressed that the favorable [and] constructive atmosphere of the negotiations was a result of a long, multi-step preparation process. He put a great value to the Pope's work promoting cooperation for the sake of peace as well as view on the relationship of politics and ethics, which is very near to the Soviet thinking which is based on the primacy of universal human values. He emphasized: Pope John Paul II is supporting both perestroika and in general the changes taking place in Eastern Europe, [but] he does not identify himself in any way with any ambitions aiming at the destabilization of the region. According to the information from the Soviet leader, as the first step toward normalization of relations between the Soviet Union and the Vatican, they will mutually send to each other permanent representatives whose function will be specified later.

At the same time the Pope was given an assurance that the situation of the Catholics [living] in the Soviet Union will be resolved within the framework of the general transformation of society, [and also] on the [legal] grounds of the forthcoming laws on freedom of conscience and religion. The Soviet side proposed direct negotiations in order to solve the open questions between the Greek Catholics and Pravoslavs and it promised to respect any agreement that would be the result of these negotiations. The Pope accepted an invitation to the Soviet Union; the date of which will be set depending on further developments.

Within the scope of detailed information given about the Soviet–American summit on Malta, M. Gorbachev – beyond the information that has already become public – made the following noteworthy statements:

In Bush's initiative [*to meet*] probably an important part was played by the pressure that had been put on him by the West European allies and significant American circles, according to whom the US administration is in a significant delay regarding the assessment of the European processes and the genuine reaction to them. The [*American*] proposal was welcomed positively from the Soviet side because on the one hand it is in their interest to continue the Soviet–American dialogue, [*and*] to support President Bush, on the other hand the meeting offered a good opportunity to get acquainted with the views of the new administration as well as to expound on Soviet expectations. Talks were open and constructive from start to finish. Bush – unlike his predecessor – did not try to give his partner a lecture. According to Soviet assessment, the present American President is prudent, cautious in his decisions, and this is indispensably a positive feature amid the present circumstances when any hurried steps could have very serious consequences.

Regarding talks on Soviet–American economic relations at the summit, M. Gorbachev's information was rather reticent. Without mentioning concrete issues, he mentioned only this: there was agreement about the opportunity for moving on [*with the economy*], however, political incentives [*to influence US*] business circles are necessary. He emphasized that the American government is ready to handle both the participation of the Soviet Union in the international economic and financial institutions as well as the question of granting it most favored nation status in a new way.

M. Gorbachev described the debate on the security, [*and*] political-military questions as very constructive, despite the fact that significant difference of standpoints in many important questions will continue. In his opinion, there are favorable prospects for holding an European summit in 1990. During the negotiations a concord was generally felt in that respect that a newer political impulse is needed for surmounting the difficulties, nevertheless the clearing-up of the details was postponed by the two sides to the meetings of foreign ministers planned for January, further on scheduled for March, April and May [*of 1990*]. The difference of views seems to be particularly sharp on the question of the naval bases and on the arms deployed at sea [*tactical nuclear forces at sea*]. Regarding the latter – according to Soviet judgment – the move [*to do away with all nuclear forces at sea*] is conceivable on the basis of the [*Sergey*] Akhromeyev formula according to which basically all nuclear arms belonging to this category should be eliminated. The opinions drew slightly near in the question of [*the ban of*] chemical weapons, inasmuch as [*the two sides*] came to an agreement to solve the problem on a global scale, specifically regarding the possibility of proportional realization of this aim. It is worth mentioning at the same time that the Soviet side regards the adherence of the American side to the 2% final security [*strategic*] stock [*of chemical weapons*] as incompatible with the globality [*of the aim*]. Each side set great value to the so called Open Skies initiative, at the same time the Soviets pressed for further development of this proposal, [*and they pressed for*] its extension to land, sea and space.

Among the regional conflicts, most attention was given to the crisis in Central America. According to Soviet assessment, the United States represents an aggressive standpoint in this question without reason, and has prejudices towards Nicaragua. Beside this the American side – regarding Soviet steps [*that have been*] done so far as insufficient – urges energetic Soviet pressure [*on Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega*] in order to change the policy of the Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders, and specifically in order to put a stop to the weapon deliveries [*shipping arms*] to [*San*] Salvador. According to M. Gorbachev's qualification, contrasts [*in this question*] seem antagonistic so far.

In connection with the question of Afghanistan, the Soviet side was offended by [*the fact*] that the United States is still raising unacceptable conditions against the efforts to create a coalitional government, [*while*] leaving out of consideration an earlier Soviet–American agreement that they would treat the problem of Afghanistan as an example of wrapping up crisis centers with political tools. Whereas both sides acknowledged its partner's efforts for searching for possibilities of settling the Middle East crisis and both of them appreciated the role of the PLO [*Palestine Liberation Organization*]. The Soviet side indicated: according to their view, the PLO has reached the limit of its possibilities, [*and*] the United States should put pressure on Israel in the interest of the compromises that are still needed. Reflecting upon an American issue, M. Gorbachev stated that from their side there are no principal obstacles in [*the way of the*] normalization of the Soviet–

Israeli relations [*to reestablish diplomatic relation broken off in 1967*], and he reinforced that they are ready for opening consulates mutually.

During the debate over the evaluation of the situation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe – according to the information – G. Bush from first to last pressed for a pragmatic approach of specific questions, giving an impression that he was consciously avoiding a deep and genuine exchange of views. In spite of this, at the meeting M. Gorbachev expressed in details: these changes have to be assessed and handled in the context of the changes experienced generally in the world. He stressed that the West has to change too because the further application of the methods of the Cold War, [or] presentation of positive changes as a superiority of policy of force can have very serious consequences. Present-day changes, [*and*] the need for ending Europe's division are objective demands. It is, however, unacceptable to achieve unity through the abolition of socialism, [*and it is similarly unacceptable to achieve it*] exclusively on the basis of Western values, [*as well as*] to replace the Brezhnev doctrine with a certain Bush doctrine. Peoples' right to independent development [*to make their own choices*] has to be fully respected everywhere.

The American President stressed the stabilization role of the political-military alliance systems, at the same time he accepted that some essential modifications in the character of alliances in order to increase their openness, [*and*] their willingness to cooperate is [*indeed*] needed. Both sides have agreed – and according to M. Gorbachev's assessment other NATO country leaders are of the same opinion – that the question of the abolition of military blocks, proposed by the WT [*Warsaw Treaty*], should not be handled hastily, emotionally, [*and*] one-sidedly. Similarly, withdrawal of the foreign troops stationing abroad [*military personnel deployed on foreign territory*] has to be dealt with prudently.

Regarding the German question, President Bush reaffirmed the principle of inviolability of the [*state*] borders, and the fact of the existence of two German states, but according to Soviet assessment at the summit no unambiguous American standpoint was outlined regarding this matter. M. Gorbachev at the same time resolutely refused [*Helmut*] Kohl's confederation plan, which – in his opinion – was proposed by the West German chancellor obviously from [*pre-*]electoral considerations.

President Bush unambiguously reinforced America's support for the Soviet perestroika, at the same time – according to the information – he concentrated his message basically on two topics: on the propagation of the advantages of private property, and on securing a peaceful framework for the promising developments in the Baltics and in the southern [*Soviet*] republics. The Soviet side stated that they regard the *degree of economic independence* of the producers as the key question over the form of property, whereas in the second issue [*of the Baltics and the southern Soviet republics*] they expect the United States to use the same standard regardless of where the problems specifically occur.

During the short remarks after the briefing [*the following was heard:*]

The word was first given to P. Mladenov who just praised the quick information, and spoke about the significance of reinforcing the cooperation;

Rezső Nyers urged the earliest possible reform of the WP, specifically he pressed for rejecting foregoing unviable methods of Comecon, and for forming fundamentally new forms of cooperation.

H. Modrow practically dealt only with the topic of German reunification – which in his wording has already appeared as a slogan in the GDR. He described the American standpoint regarding the two German states as controversial, and he stated that even from the Kohl Plan they can only accept the first four points which concern the reinforcement of contractual relations.

W. Jaruzelski also stressed the proper handling of the German question, [*and stressed*] the necessity of forming a united standpoint in this issue, because this problem – as he said: also

because of the question of [state] borders – is of great importance for them. Beside this he urged the modernization, [and] reinforcement of cooperation within Comecon arguing that thus the organization would increase our influence, and would provide a reliable background for our international actions.

N. Ceausescu once again stressed the negative tendencies aggravating the international situation. He emphasized that the anti-communism of the Western countries has gained a new strength, and its effect can be sensed particularly in the countries which were liquidating socialism.

He specified the campaigns for discrediting certain [communist] countries and their leaders as meaningless.

He repeated his initiative for summoning a high-level conference in order to discuss some questions concerning the development of socialism and the peace policy in this very year, and he stated that Romania – yielding to the pressure of numerous countries – is even ready to host an international conference of the communist and workers' parties.

K. Urbanek stated as the most direct goal the creation of a humane, [and] democratic socialism in Czechoslovakia.

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The participants of the conference (except for the Romanian delegation which was not directly involved in this issue) adopted a short joint declaration condemning the Czechoslovakian action [military intervention] of the WT in 1968.

An agreement, put forward by Bulgaria, was settled that the next-in-line council meeting of the Comecon would be held in Sophia on January 9–10, 1990.

Budapest, December 6, 1989

The list of names of the delegations participating in the conference in Moscow December 4, 1989

Bulgaria:

Petar [Toshev] Mladenov, Secretary General of the BCP [Bulgarian Communist Party], President of the State Council [Head of State]

Georgi Atanasov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers [Prime Minister]

Dimiter Stanisev, Secretary of the CC [Central Committee]

Bojko Dimitrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Czechoslovakia:

Karel Urbánek, Secretary General of the CPC [Communist Party of Czechoslovakia]

Ladislav Adamec, President of the Federal Government

Ondrej Saling, Secretary of the CC [Central Committee]

Jaromir Johannes, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Poland:

Wojciech Jaruzelski, President of the Republic [of Poland]

Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Chairman of the Council of Ministers [Prime Minister]

Mieczyslaw Rakowski, First Secretary of the CC of the PUWP [Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party]

Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hungary:

Nyers Rezső, President of MSZP [Hungarian Socialist Party]

Németh Miklós, Chairman of the Council of Ministers [Prime Minister]

Somogyi Ferenc, Under Secretary of the [*Hungarian Ministry of*] Foreign Affairs

GDR:

Egon Krenz, President of the State Council [*Head of State*]

Hans Modrow, Chairman of the Council of Ministers [*Prime Minister*]

Oscar Fischer, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Romania:

Nicolae Ceausescu, President of the State Council [*Head of State*], Secretary General of the RCP [*Romanian Communist Party*]

Constantin Dascalescu, Prime Minister

Constantin Olteanu, Secretary of the CC [*Central Committee*]

The Soviet Union:

Mikhail [*Sergeyevich*] Gorbachev, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Secretary General of the CPSU CC [*Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*]

Nikolai [*Ivanovich*] Ryzhkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers [*Prime Minister*]

Eduard Shevardnadze, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Alexsander [*Nikolaevich*] Yakovlev, Secretary of the CC [*Central Committee; Chairman, International Committee*]