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Hope and Reality: Poland and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1964–1989

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Introduction

Poland's interest in creating a system of collective security in Europe has been rooted mostly in the Polish historical experience and resulting feelings of insecurity. Taking this experience into account, and given the security reality facing Poland—a medium-sized state situated in Central Europe, with borders considered merely provisional after the Second World War—interest in a such system can perhaps be seen as “natural.”

As a part of the Soviet bloc, Poland lacked full independence in foreign affairs and its policies generally had to be coordinated with Moscow. As with other bloc countries, one can speak of a structural dependence, existing not only in politics but also in the economic, military, ideological, and cultural realms, all of which meant that Poland did not have an independent foreign policy. However, while most aspects of Polish diplomacy needed to be discussed with the Soviets, the Poles did not always follow Moscow's line. Documents left by the Polish United Workers Party and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs reveal that Poland had some room for maneuver. Especially after Władysław Gomułka's return to power in 1956, Polish communist authorities tried to take advantage of a growing number of opportunities for autonomous action, and were seeking solutions to the two issues they saw as most urgent: recognition of the Oder–Neisse line as a permanent western frontier and non-proliferation of nuclear arms to West Germany. On such critical issues, Warsaw was even prepared to oppose various Soviet policies. Some examples of Moscow's readiness for compromise are known, but it is likely that the Soviets would not readily accept Polish

demands if they contradicted long-standing Soviet objectives.¹ One can assume that the Polish diplomats knew their limits and in many situations were able to restrain their actions.

The main purpose of this article is to present the Polish government and party attitude towards the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in the long run, that is: until 1989, but not to describe the conduct of the CSCE process in all its aspects or to analyze the attitude of different social groups in Poland towards the CSCE. Rather, this article seeks to show Polish elite expectations and perceptions, using Polish documents, most of which are generally unfamiliar to both Polish and foreign researchers. These documents are mostly contained in the Archive of the Modern Acts (*Archiwum Akt Nowych* - AAN) and the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych* – AMSZ). The majority of these documents have not yet been used by historians, and some are still classified per the 30-year law applicable to diplomatic documents.

The Polish government's attitude towards the CSCE process has not been a subject of profound research or analysis for a number of years.² The majority of Polish publications concerning the CSCE were written mostly by those personally involved in the conference during the 1970s and 1980s, and are usually based on their personal experiences and official CSCE documents.³ They have value in that

¹ W. Jarząbek, "W sprawach niemieckich nasz głos musi mieć swą wagę..." *Problem niemiecki w polskiej polityce zagranicznej od października 1956 do rozpoczęcia tzw. drugiego kryzysu berlińskiego w 1958 r.* ("As to the German Problem our voice should be strong..." - Polish foreign policy on the German Question 1956 - 1958), in: *Dzieje Najnowsze*, 1/2001, p.103 f. As a good example of attempts to influence the Soviet Union German policy can be treated i.e. the Polish diplomatic action after the announcement of the FRG's government peace note in March 1966. As a consequence of Polish pressure the Soviet answer included as a precondition to signing the treaty on renunciation of using force the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line. Next, Poland was deeply engaged in the coordination of the bloc's policy towards German Ostpolitik. See: W. Jarząbek "Ulbricht- Doktrine" oder "Gomułka-Doktrin"? *Das Bemühen der Volksrepublik Polen um eine geschlossene Politik des kommunistischen Blocks gegenüber der westdeutschen Ostpolitik 1966/67*, in: *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa – Forschung* 55(2006), H.1, p.79f.

² A new perspective is provided by W. Jarząbek, *Polska wobec Konferencji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie. Plany i rzeczywistość 1964 – 1975*, Warszawa 2008. This book has also a documentary annex.

³ S. Dąbrowa, *Zasady nienaruszalności granic i integralności terytorialnej państw na KBWE*, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 11/1975, p.7 f.; M. Dobrosielski, *Belgrad 1977*, Warszawa 1978; J.N. Nowak, *Poland and the OSCE: In Search of More Comprehensive European Security*, Warszawa 1997; A.D. Rotfeld,

they provide personal observations, but primary sources now allow us to see some new aspects of the policy process, revealing high level consultations between Polish officials and their counterparts from the USSR, other bloc countries, and the West, as well as providing researchers with numerous studies and expert reports which offer better opportunities to evaluate both Polish contributions to the conference and the policy process behind them. This rich documentary record is complemented by information gathered through interviews with several participants of the CSCE.⁴

This article does not seek to explore all aspects of the CSCE or all aspects of the Polish attitude regarding the conference, instead concentrating on specific topics, especially those in which it is possible to infer particular Polish interest, as well as specific ideas which were important to the liberalization of the political system and the end of communism. Much attention will be devoted to Polish preparations for the conference, where the Poles distinguished between conceptions and expectations at the conference. This is followed by an analysis of the official Polish attitude toward the Helsinki Final Act, with an evaluation of gains and losses. Finally, the paper will show what Poland expected from the CSCE after 1975, how the Polish authorities wanted to participate in shaping the CSCE process, what their attitude was towards the stipulations and recommendations accepted at subsequent conferences and meetings, and how this process influenced the domestic situation in Poland.

From Helsinki to Madrid, CSCE 1973 – 1983, PISM, Warszawa 1983; A.D. Rotfeld, *Europejski system bezpieczeństwa in statu nascendi*, PISM, Warszawa 1990. The participants of the conference were also authors of the articles in a book on implementation of the CSCE decisions, *Polska a realizacja uchwał KBWE*, v. 1,2, PISM, Warszawa 1988.

On Western attitude, i.e.: V-Y. Ghebali, *La diplomatie de la détente, la CSCE, d'Helsinki à Vienne, 1973 – 1989*, Brussels 1989. On negotiations during the Helsinki conference: L.V. Ferraris, *Report on a Negotiation: Helsinki, Geneva, Helsinki:1972 – 1975*, Alphen aan den Rijn, Geneve 1979. On human rights: D.C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford 2001.

⁴ Interviews were conducted with ministers Józef Czyrek, Adam D. Rotfeld, deputy ministers Jan Bisztyga, Marian Dobrosielski, and foreign ministry experts Andrzej Skowroński, Bogumił Rychłowski.

1. Polish Preparations

1.1. The Birth of the Idea

Polish communists were interested in maintaining power and controlling the country's political, social, and cultural life. But in many situations communist ideology was not the dominating factor motivating their behavior, a case in point being Polish foreign policy, especially in the 1960s. Polish authorities did not trust Moscow entirely, as they doubted that the Soviets would protect Polish national interest in every situation. Especially after Gomułka's return to power, Warsaw grew increasingly active diplomatically, as the Polish government aimed at securing the nation's interests as perceived by the government at that time. The first diplomatic initiative of this type was the Rapacki Plan of 1957. Scholars differ on how it originated, with some viewing it as a Polish idea, others as a Soviet initiative merely presented by the Poles. Polish documents support the idea that the plan was a Polish initiative (even when placed in context with the other plans for a nuclear-free zone presented contemporaneously), conceived in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then presented in bilateral talks with the Soviets and coordinated with them. Newly uncovered documents suggest that the Soviets were not initially satisfied with the plan.⁵

After the second Berlin Crisis (1958–1962) Polish authorities began to think that an opportunity to mitigate Soviet–German animosities was emerging and that it could happen at Polish charge. The Poles were afraid of being betrayed by the Soviets, by ending public support for permanently settling the border issue or encouraging the West German government to collaborate at an eventual peace conference. Warsaw was especially alarmed by the public statements of Alexei Adzhubei, Nikita Khrushchev's son-in-law, who visited Germany in July 1962. In

⁵ P. Wandycz, *Adam Rapacki and the Search for European Security*, in: *The Diplomats 1939 – 1979*, ed. G. A. Craig, F. L. Loewenheim, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1994, p. 311. The Soviets demonstrated their dissatisfaction i.e. to the Polish diplomats in Moscow - see: W. Jarzabek, *W sprawach niemieckich ...*, p.123.

1964 the Soviet ambassador to Bonn, Andrei Smirnov, began talks with Chancellor Ludwig Erhard. Polish policymakers were not informed about the details of these visits. Piotr Kostikov, who in the late 1960s became the head of the Polish Section in the CPSU CC Department for Relations with Socialist Countries, wrote that Gomułka instinctively felt the danger that Khrushchev, influenced by the pro-German lobby within the Soviet leadership, had tried to implement a “dishonest” plan.⁶ The evidence so far does not prove that there ever was such a scheme, but certainly for some members of the Polish Politburo it was clear that great powers interest varied differed from their own.

In October 1963 Gomułka began to be disappointed with proposed Soviet conditions for a non-proliferation treaty. He was particularly troubled by the fact that it did not include a ban on the creation of multilateral nuclear forces within NATO, which could potentially allow the FRG to possess nuclear arms. After consultations with the Politburo, Gomułka wrote a letter to Khrushchev in which he informed the Soviets that Poland would not agree to their proposal.⁷ Further discussions on a non-proliferation treaty revealed numerous differences in attitude within the Warsaw Pact.⁸ Poland then presented its new plan, the so-called “Gomułka Plan” for a nuclear freeze.

The “Rapallo policy,” which Warsaw viewed as an attempt by Moscow and Bonn to cooperate more closely, caused anxiety but also motivated the Polish regime to launch a more active policy towards the FRG and other Western countries. It is worth mentioning that Poland never wanted the Warsaw Pact’s German policy to be dictated exclusively by Moscow, or belong to East Germany’s special privileges, and actively demonstrated this point.

⁶ P. Kostikov, B. Roliński, *Widziane z Kremla. Moskwa – Warszawa. Gra o Polskę*, BGW, Warszawa 1992, p.17. W. Jarzabek, “Ulbricht Doktrin” oder “Gomułka Doktrine” ? ..., p. 87 f.

⁷ Letter of W. Gomułka to N. Khrushchev, 8 October 1963, in: *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego . PRL – ZSRR 1956 – 1970*, ed. A. Paczkowski, Aneks, Londyn 1998, p.170.

⁸ D. Selvage, *The Warsaw Pact and nuclear nonproliferation, 1963 – 1965*, The Cold War International History Project Working Paper, 32/ 2001.

Against the background of Polish diplomatic action in the years 1956–1964, Adam Rapacki’s statement at the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1964 could be seen as a logical continuation. He stated that “there is probably a right time to consider the questions of European security in all their aspects. The possibility of convening a conference of all European states should be considered, of course with the participation of the USSR and the United States to examine these questions.”⁹ Soviet historians have argued that Rapacki’s announcement was coordinated with other member-states of the Warsaw Pact.¹⁰ However, Polish archival sources do not provide any evidence for this thesis and some eye-witnesses reject it as well.¹¹ In the 1950s, the Soviets presented the idea of a conference on security, and many Western historians have treated this as the birth of a conference idea. While there are some connections to the ideas of 1954–1955, Rapacki’s statement was more directly relevant to contemporaneous perceptions of Polish national security. At the 20th Session of the UN General Assembly in 1965, the Poles revisited the idea of a conference. The proposed agenda was supplemented with the issue of economic cooperation, in which the Polish government was continuously interested. Polish diplomats began to seek support for the project in Western countries, especially Belgium and France.

1.2. *Ostpolitik* and Plans for a European Conference

In March 1966 the FRG proposed that Soviet bloc countries (East Germany excluded) conclude treaties renouncing the use of force. This so-called “peace note” was the beginning of a new West German *Ostpolitik*. For Poland, this proposition was not satisfactory, as it only called for bilateral treaties renouncing the use of force and did not include recognition of the Oder-Neisse border. Warsaw also expected that Bonn’s political influence would grow and that this

⁹ Quoted in: A. D. Rotfeld, *From Helsinki...*p. 16.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

process would take place before Poland would obtain guarantees for the final character of its western frontier. Moreover, Warsaw considered Soviet policy ambiguous. For example, in January 1967, Leonid Brezhnev informed the Polish leadership in Łańsk that he planned to give the bloc countries the “green light” for talks with West Germany. Gomułka tried his best to convince the Soviet Union and the other countries to collaborate more closely on the German question. To implement this plan, he cooperated with the GDR. The Polish First Secretary’s action was thus an application of the "Gomułka Doctrine," as I have called the Polish-German policy conducted at the time.¹²

These events directly influenced Polish preparations for the “European conference” as it was then called, and to a large degree they related to Polish policy vis-à-vis Germany in the late 1960s. Authors of studies prepared at the time looked for different options to minimize the danger emerging from Bonn’s new policy.

At the start of the conference preparations, Poland expected every European country to participate in the conference. Thought was even given to Vatican participation, if only in an observer role. When the idea was born in the mid-1960s, plans also included US participation, as only a continued US presence could provide guarantees in European politics, a limit to West German room for maneuver, and balance to the Soviet position.¹³ At the Bucharest Declaration of the Warsaw Pact countries in July 1966, the Soviet bloc made the idea of a security conference one of its main foreign policy objectives. The Karlsbad

¹¹ Many Polish diplomats defend the opinion, that it was a Polish idea and that they did not act according to Soviet instructions. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Józef Czyrek attested to this in an interview by the author in November 2004.

¹² See: W. Jarząbek, “*Ulbricht – Doktrin oder Gomułka – Doktrine*”?..., p. 112. I use the term “Gomułka doctrine” to describe a clear line in the Polish foreign policy in the years 1956 – 1970, according to which Poland was trying to have influence on the Soviet and bloc German policy in order to receive international recognition of the Oder – Neisse line and avoid situations in which this recognition would be used as a diplomatic bargaining chip.

¹³ According to Bogumił Rychłowski, one of Gomułka’s interpreters and a diplomat and analyst in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Poland was also strongly interested in the US military presence in Europe from the same reasons. Interview with B. Rychłowski in December 2004

Declaration of European communist and workers parties in April 1967 also included an appeal to convene a conference on security and cooperation in Europe.

The Eastern bloc countries included the question of a European conference in their regular diplomatic activities, but different countries emphasized different aspects of the idea. Poland was interested mostly in political and military issues, such as freezing armaments and signing a pan-European convention on renouncing the use of military force, to include recognition of the GDR and acceptance of the existing territorial status quo, in particular the Oder-Neisse line.¹⁴ At that time it seemed to be impossible to resolve border issues using a bilateral agreement with Bonn; Poland and West Germany did not even have diplomatic relations, and Warsaw wanted to reach an agreement within a European “framework,” also treating the conference as a substitute for a peace conference with Germany.¹⁵ Poland was aware that the USSR was thinking about concluding a bilateral convention with the FRG, which would be limited to a renunciation of the use of force without an explicit guarantee for specific borders. Polish politicians thought that this approach had its source in Soviet economic needs, for as Soviet industry sought new technologies, the FRG was perceived as being eager for closer collaboration. Warsaw also was aware that long-standing foreign policy goals were different for both countries and that the Soviet Union would try to realize those it deemed paramount.

The Polish government did not want the conference to limit itself to accepting the *status quo*. They expected that it would be possible to create a forum for the discussion of various political topics, especially security questions, and that these issues would cease to be beholden to great-power prerogatives, opening opportunities for smaller (also dependent) countries to become active in the

¹⁴ Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (AMSZ), DSiP (Department of Studies and Planning), c. (collection) 60/77, v. (volume) 1, Project of Eventual Diplomatic Action, 13 February 1969. Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria were mostly interested in possibilities of opening to the West and closer regional collaboration in the Danube region. The Poles wanted the legal and political matters to be the main discussion at the conference.

international arena. In the Polish case it would also mean a weakening of Soviet influence, although the documents do not mention this directly.

1.3. Economic Cooperation

Economic collaboration was the second issue to be discussed during a European conference, according to Polish plans made in the late 1960s. Warsaw's interest in a greater opening to the West was also shared by the Soviet Union and the other satellite nations, but Polish experts working on this issue considered the ideas of the other bloc countries as too traditional. Some Polish ideas were in fact aimed at preventing the economic division of Europe, which would complicate Poland's economic situation. At the end of the 1960s (as well as earlier) the economic interests of Poland differed sharply from those of the Soviet Union. Moreover, at the time, the Soviet Union was not able to meet Polish needs due to its technological underdevelopment. In the case of oil supplies, Moscow had the opportunity to sell oil to Western Europe at higher prices than to its bloc allies. The Soviet Union used to treat economic relations with the bloc countries as a function of its politics. In the case of Poland this caused a great deal of tension. In many high-level talks, Polish politburo members were confronted with this attitude. They were told that their political engagement influenced Moscow's attitude toward Polish economic needs. But they first had to face a Soviet lack of interest in helping Poland to realize its plan of modernization, preferring Poland to remain simply a supplier of raw materials.¹⁶ Specialization within COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) meant that the GDR and Czechoslovakia were chosen as the countries in which new technologies were to be implemented first, and where the most modern of industries were to be developed (e.g. the chemical industry). Investments in the coal, iron, or sulfur

¹⁵ Present role of CSCE in the détente process, Note for Olszowski, 13 November 1974, in: W. Jarząbek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 249 f.

industries, towards which Poland was inclined within COMECON, were expensive and impractical, as the prices used in economic exchanges between bloc countries were not calculated using market rates.

European integration was also important for Polish political planning. In the late 1960s, the Common Market countries began to form a common agricultural policy while Poland began to have problems in both reaching new agreements and renewing old ones. Countries interested in joining the Common Market, such as the UK, were avoiding commitments that could potentially undermine these aspirations.¹⁷ This resulted in a number of problems for Polish exports, especially as agricultural products constituted the bulk of Polish exports to England, West Germany (Poland's largest trading partner, despite having no diplomatic relations), West Berlin, the Netherlands, and Belgium.¹⁸ The gradual introduction of a common tax and customs policy by the European Economic Community (EEC) countries towards third countries complicated Polish attempts to develop trade with the Common Market. Changes in international economic relations also affected Polish coal exports.

In the mid-1960s, more 'gates to the West' were closing just as Warsaw was looking for new markets. This need was partly spurred by Poland's accession to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1967. As a GATT member, Poland was obliged to buy goods in the West and increase its imports from the West every year by 7%.

Poland needed hard currency to buy Western products and was very interested in the possibility of selling its products to the West to fulfill international commitments. This made Poland's status within the bloc somewhat peculiar. Poland's membership in the Warsaw Pact meant that only a change in

¹⁶ Note on Polish – Soviet talks on 24-25 May 1957, in: *Tajne dokumenty...*, p. 66 -68; W. Jarzabek, *W sprawach niemieckich...*, p. 10. Moscow wanted to stop Polish attempts to modernize industry, See for example: Note on Polish Soviet Talks in Moscow on 13-15 April 1964, in: *Tajne dokumenty...*, s. p.182, f.

¹⁷ AMSZ, Dep. IV (Department IV), c. 23/76, v.10, Information note on the securing Polish trade interests, 6 February 1969.

¹⁸ On Polish economy see: J. Kaliński, Z. Landau, *Gospodarka Polski w XX wieku*, KiW, Warszawa 1998.

East–West relations could allow for the development of trade with the West. Imports from the West were especially dependent on détente, as according to regulations set by COCOM (Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls) many products with potential or actual military applications were banned from export to the bloc countries; in many cases this included the latest in civilian technologies. In my opinion, Polish work on the rules for economic collaboration within the CSCE, which concentrated on rules facilitating inter-bloc trade, were a consequence of Poland’s experience of a worsened international economic environment in the mid-1960s.

1.4. The First Phase of Preparatory Talks: Disputes over the Agenda

In 1968, Polish internal crises and the Prague Spring pushed the idea of a conference into the background, both because domestic issues took precedence and the chill in East-West relations. However, beginning in 1969, the idea of a conference on security was revived. For the Soviet Union, the idea of any eventual conference would be a first step in normalizing its relations with the West, and so Moscow was not interested in demanding any pre-conditions that could make a conference more difficult to achieve. For Poland, such a conference would present the opportunity to obtain more room for maneuver in its international political and economic relations as well as an occasion to eliminate the danger of Moscow or other great powers taking advantage of the Oder-Neisse border issue. Polish diplomats treated the conference as a Polish idea and wanted to be active in its implementation and also wanted to keep their eyes on intra-bloc consultations concerning the conference agenda and protocol.

In early 1969, experts from the Polish foreign ministry began working on the agenda for a European security conference, mandated by a decision of the Polish United Workers Party’s 5th Congress held in November 1968. They thought that this would be an appropriate time for a conference, as the idea began to be more popular among the smaller Western European countries, which also feared

being eliminated from international debate as a consequence of the developing dialogue between the USA and the Soviet Union. They also estimated that there was a danger that “the West and first of all the FRG would take the leading role in an international discussion concerning European security, which could cause attention to be fixed on topics not comfortable for us.”¹⁹ They were also afraid that the four biggest powers would create a commission of ten countries with the participation of both German states, which would place Poland in a secondary role in terms of conference preparations and in effect would limit opportunities for realizing Polish aims. Describing the direction of diplomatic action, experts pointed mostly to the Western countries, but Polish ideas were to be presented to the Soviets first.

Polish foreign ministry experts suggested concentrating on four issues: first, a system of gradual disarmament as a result of the conclusion and implementation of a non-proliferation treaty; second, legal and political means of détente including a treaty on the renunciation of the use of force, which Warsaw expected would have an international character. The experts did not recommend endorsing a precise form of the treaty yet, as they expected that the FRG-Soviet talks would be renewed soon and the means of using this problem in negotiation seemed to be unclear. Economic relations were viewed as the third aspect of a future conference. The Polish side wanted to limit or exclude barriers in international trade and to base collaboration on the basis of most-favored-nation status (MFN), which would be given to every country participating in the conference. As for the protocol for the preparations, bilateral talks and upcoming multilateral dialog between East, West and neutral countries were suggested as becoming more favorable. All participating countries were to have equal status in negotiations.

In the meantime, the Soviets began to implement their plans. In March 1969 the Warsaw Pact countries announced in Budapest the “Appeal for a European

¹⁹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Initial project of our attitude to the agenda of the conference, 13 February 1969.

Security Conference,” which called for the inviolability (not recognition, as the Poles wanted) of the Oder–Neisse line and the GDR–FRG border as a “fundamental pre-requisite for Europe’s security,” but not for the gathering of a European conference.²⁰ It was pointed out that one step toward a conference could be “an early meeting of officials of all interested European states at which they could jointly set the procedure for convening the all-European conference and define the questions to be placed on its agenda.” This wording did not meet with Polish expectations, of which Moscow was systematically informed after 1956, and made it clear that the Poles needed to intensify their pressure on the Soviet Union, bloc countries and also the West.

The results of the Budapest conference mobilized the Polish leadership and diplomatic corps. At the beginning of April 1969 foreign minister Stefan Jędrzychowski prepared a note on further Polish activity, addressed to the party leaders the contents of which were soon accepted as guidelines.²¹ Writing about the need to intensify Polish diplomatic actions, he underlined that the Soviet Union placed its global interest in the first plan and other bloc countries, as could be estimated after the bilateral talks, were not interested in stressing the question of territorial status quo. He pointed out the need for “better coordination of the activities of the socialist countries,” which meant that the Poles wanted to avoid any “new surprises” from the Soviet Union or the Eastern bloc.

According to the Polish position, any conference should deal with the problems mentioned in the Budapest Appeal, and the means of resolving them was to conclude a pan-European treaty or declaration on the renunciation of the use of force and the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs (including of course the recognition of the status quo). Discussions were also to include the next steps toward disarmament to be undertaken in Europe as well as economic cooperation

²⁰ Appeal for a European Security Conference, 17 March 1969 in: *A Cardboard Castles? An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact 1955-1991*, ed. V. Mastny and M. Byrne, CSU Press 2005, p. 330. T. Garton Ash, *W imieniu Europy. Niemcy i podzielony kontynent*, Aneks, London 1996, p 76.

issues. Warsaw did not want cultural and tourist exchanges to be the main topic of the conference.²²

Polish diplomats and leaders began to appeal for organizing bloc consultations, comparable to the 1966 and 1967 period, when Poland (with East German cooperation) tried and was mostly successful in blocking other bloc countries from normalizing their relations with West Germany.²³ But the situation had changed and bloc resistance was now stronger.

Bilateral Polish–Soviet consultations took place on 28-29 April in Moscow.²⁴ The chief of the Polish delegation, Deputy Minister Adam Kruczkowski, discussed most of the issues with the Soviet Deputy Minister Leonid Ilichev, but he also met with Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The Soviets, declaring that their support for the idea of a conference was real and ran deep, avoided speaking about details, which they explained as being because the “MID has not prepared a more detailed plan for future action.” Soviet diplomats explained that they “were instructed to present the view” that there were to be no preconditions for the conference, but that questions of borders, nonproliferation, and nuclear weapons reduction were to be used to propagate the idea of a conference. Gromyko told Kruczkowski that at first Western reactions to the decisions of the forthcoming conference of Warsaw Pact deputy ministers should be observed and that the bloc countries should next coordinate their positions during the ministers’ meeting. Kruczkowski presented the Polish attitude according to instructions based on the Jędrychowski note from April 4th. A. A. Gromyko answered that the Soviets were of the opinion “that it would be better not to present the whole package at the beginning.”²⁵

²¹ Note on further consultations with USSR by S. Jędrychowski on April 4, 1969, in: W. Jarząbek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 183 f.

²² Ibid.

²³ See: W. Jarząbek, “Ulbricht – Doktrine” oder “Gomułka – Doktrin”?..., p.87 f.

²⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Note on Moscow talks by A. Kruczkowski, 2 May 1969.

²⁵ Ibid..

Soviet reticence on the agenda of a future conference, especially on border issues, was not the only reason for Polish anxiety. In the spring of 1969 West Germany and the GDR concluded an agreement on economic collaboration, and East Germany was successful in blocking a decision on closer collaboration within COMECON.²⁶ Warsaw was not informed of the details of Soviet-FRG talks, but it knew that the Soviet Union was interested in progress which meant a lack of interest for preconditions. Warsaw did not want the Soviet Union unilaterally to decide questions perceived as being crucial for Polish independence and the feeling of menace were probably the main reason for the change in Polish policy towards Germany, announced by Władysław Gomułka in a public election speech of 17 May 1969.²⁷

Gomułka proposed that West Germany and Poland start talks on border recognition and also expressed expectations of a future conference that addressed the many problems of European security, including the Oder–Neisse line and the recognition of the GDR. Gomułka did not inform Moscow about his plans in advance.²⁸ He expected that it would be difficult for Bonn to leave the Polish proposal unanswered, but the proposal was made at an inopportune time. The West German government was preparing for elections (planned for 28 September) and was not interested in changing its official position, i.e. that the border issue should be settled during a peace conference with a united Germany. Finally, West German reactions were limited to general recognition of the speech and did not sound encouraging for Warsaw.²⁹

²⁶ M. Tomala, *Patrząc na Niemcy. Od wrogości do porozumienia 1945 – 1991*, Polska Fundacja Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 1997, p.157 f.

²⁷ W. Gomułka, "Zgodnie z najbardziej żywotnymi interesami narodu polskiego", Z przemówienia na spotkaniu z wyborcami w Warszawie, wygłoszonego 17 maja 1969, w: *O problemie niemieckim. Artykuły i przemówienia*, KiW, Warszawa 1984, p. 76 (Gomułka's speech from 17th of May).

²⁸ W. Jarząbek, "Ulbricht Doktrin oder Gomułka Doktrin ? ...", p.113. The Polish Ambassador to Moscow Jan Ptasiński explained the reason of the lack of earlier consultations in late May.

²⁹ D. Bingen, *Polityka Republiki Bońskiej wobec Polski. Od Adenauera do Kohla 1949-1991*, Kwadrat, Kraków 1997, p.108 f.

Soon after this shift in Polish foreign policy, the deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Pact met in Berlin on 20-21 May 1969.³⁰ The Polish delegation proposed not only future coordination of bloc activity but also a “standardization of the interpretation of the Budapest Appeal” (this was to clarify whether it presented topics to be discussed during the conference or just general remarks on European security). The Polish delegation also stated that Warsaw opposed using the “10 countries’ group” as an initiative group as well as discussing the question of European security at the UN. The Czechoslovak, Hungarian, GDR, and Polish governments all indicated during talks that “tactics toward the Western countries should be coordinated,” but were not able to force the Soviet hand, as Moscow supported the Romanian delegation’s opinion that the meeting should be limited to the exchange of information. Deputy Minister Zygfryd Wolniak noted in his report that it was clear that the USSR did not want to speak about details because it expected to come to an agreement with the United States first. The results of the Berlin meeting did not meet Polish expectations as it was agreed that initial talks should start without preconditions, also as to participating states.

Poland kept working on its plans and looking for changes in Soviet policy. Talks with Brezhnev, who came to Warsaw for a Polish state celebration on 22 July, did not indicate any change in the Soviet attitude. On 6 September 1969, Deputy Foreign Minister Ilichev visited Poland to explain the Soviet view, but still was rather averse to discussing details or future plans.

Following Ilichev’s visit a note summarizing preparations was distributed. This represented the first indication that the main objective of a conference and the first step in work on European security should be concluding a “Treaty on Collective Security and Cooperation in Europe.”³¹ Such a treaty was to include a renunciation of the use of force and the recognition of existing borders, as well as a declaration on respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence

³⁰ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Note on meeting in Berlin, by Z. Wolniak, 22 May 1969.

of European states. After concluding a treaty, signatory states would commit themselves not to aid any aggressor states, while any state being attacked would be allowed to receive help from its allies. Some more forward-looking steps were suggested, such as discussing the possibility of resolving the military alliance issue in Europe and replacing them with a system of collective security. Signatory states would also be obliged to implement disarmament plans and develop economic cooperation further. This project was sent to Gomułka and select Politburo members on 13 September. It is striking that analysis of the project shows some similarities with ideas of collective security presented by Poland in the League of Nations, e.g., starting from the late 1920s Poland was very active in talks on the definition of an aggressor. This was caused by similarities in perceptions of danger resulting from the lack of border guarantees both before and after the Second World War, although the Polish geostrategic position was drastically different.

On 26 September 1969, Wolniak met Vladimir S. Semenov, the Soviet deputy minister in Warsaw.³² The meeting took place at Soviet initiative as a part of the bilateral consultations held with all bloc countries prior to the foreign ministers meeting in Prague (and one day after consultations with the East Germans). The Soviets probably wanted to prevent large differences between the bloc countries from appearing during the forthcoming meeting. As Warsaw and Moscow differed, after a long four hour conversation, talks were continued during lunch. Semenov said that, before the conference, some Western countries would prefer to agree on two or three questions, which would augur well for the success of the conference. According to Soviet knowledge, the question of recognition of the postwar borders or the GDR did not belong to this category. Semenov also suggested that in the event of Western objections to GDR participation it would be possible to argue that according to international law and practice, conference

³¹ Further action on European conference on security and cooperation, sent by S. Jedrychowski to the PUWP CC, 13 September 1969, in: W. Jarząbek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 195 f.

participation was not dependent on international recognition. The greatest opportunity for acceptance would be to have a treaty or declaration on the renunciation of force or threats to do so (the Soviet draft of the declaration did not mention either recognition or respect for existing borders) and one on the development of economic, cultural, and scientific relations, which would improve the atmosphere of political relations. During the conference, the bloc countries could suggest convening another conference to deal with more complicated questions of European security. The Soviets were of the opinion that a preparatory conference was not necessary and that all problems eventually could be solved by bilateral talks. Semenov also said that the Soviet Union intended to continue bilateral negotiations with West Germany on a declaration on the renunciation of force. Only in case the European conference would result in a pan-European declaration, the Soviet Union could think about discontinuing the talks with West Germany.

After Semenov finished his presentation, Wolniak stated that the official Polish point of view would be presented after the party leadership had reached agreement, but that he wished to make some remarks. He said that the two subjects suggested by Semenov for the agenda raised numerous doubts, as the main questions of European security that had been pointed out in the Budapest Appeal, such as recognition of the territorial status quo, had been abandoned. Wolniak said that Poland opposed accepting “a minimum plan” as a bloc program, even without undertaking an attempt to resolve crucial questions in bilateral or multilateral negotiations, i.e. during a series of preparatory meetings for the European conference. He mentioned that bilateral consultations between the Warsaw Pact countries as well as foreign ministers meetings should be a forum for elaborating a common bloc position. The Polish official was of the opinion that a draft treaty on collective security should be submitted to all the European countries as a

³² Note on conversation with W.S. Semenov, by Z. Wolniak, 30 September 1969, in: W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 200 f. Documents for the Politburo i.e. Polish memorandum to the Soviet Union and Shorten

maximum program, which could be gradually realized during the first conference and subsequent meetings. Semenov reiterated his previously stated opinion but said that a foreign ministers meeting would be organized soon.

In evaluating the discussion, Wolniak argued that “the purpose of the conference (as proposed by the Soviets) could be reduced to bettering the political climate in Europe,” which would be highly inconvenient for Poland, due to its foreign policy objectives and commitment to propagating the idea of a much broader conference. He and Jędrychowski suggested to the Politburo that it would be worthwhile to inform Western countries unilaterally of the Polish proposal for a treaty on European security and cooperation.³³

In the ensuing weeks, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff began to prepare materials for negotiations with Moscow, collected the announcements of other bloc countries to compare and present them as evidence that the Soviet position was in fact a step backward and that Moscow’s policy, as the Soviet proposal for a declaration on the renunciation of force presented to West Germany implied the recognition of existing borders. Polish officials underscored that West Germany had presented its project of declaration on 3 July 1969 and suggested including a formulation that signatory states declare not to use force against the “political independence or territorial integrity” of other countries—which was understood in Warsaw as a willingness to seek compromise.³⁴ For the Polish side it was difficult to imagine that the issue of border recognition could and should be set aside, especially as Polish diplomats had a different impression of the Western attitude toward this question. For example, in bilateral talks with Ireland (this example was also mentioned by Semenov, but to prove the Soviet attitude), the Irish did not display reservations on border recognition; similarly, France did not want to recognize the East–West German borderline as an international one, but did not have any reservations about the formula for the non-violation of existing borders.

note on conversation with Semenov, AAN, KC PZPR XIA/87, p.535f.

³³ Note on conversation with W. Semenov, by Z. Wolniak, *op. cit.*

Between 1-3 October, a Polish Politburo delegation led by Gomułka paid a visit to Moscow. Some formulations used by the Soviet leaders in the Moscow discussions sounded reassuring. During talks on international problems, Brezhnev declared: “In Europe, the question of finishing and resolving the results of the Second World War is placed at the center of our interest. It will take a great deal of effort to reach a border recognition – we fight for it together with you.”³⁵ But at the working level it was difficult to speak about this same attitude, and the Polish delegation correctly suspected that the Soviets still wanted to exclude the question of borders from the conference agenda to be proposed by the bloc.

Disappointed with the Soviet position, Warsaw decided to present its ideas in written form. The Polish “Memorandum” passed to the Soviets stressed interest in consultations with the other bloc countries and supported Czechoslovakia’s suggestion of meeting in Prague to work out a common position. Recalling the Budapest Appeal, the Poles wanted the conference to deal with the full scope of questions concerning European security.³⁶ The Poles once more explained their understanding of security and the role played by postwar border issues. The principle of respecting sovereignty as well as a renunciation of the use of force were to become part of a treaty on security and cooperation in Europe, and underlined that any agreement on the renunciation of force, in which the Federal Republic would participate, without a simultaneous recognition of borders would not represent progress. According to the Polish memorandum, the Soviet proposal for an agreement on economic cooperation was overly general. It was the Polish note that suggested that some points be added, e.g. the realization of European common projects in the field of energy, transport, water systems, financial collaboration, and establishing formal contact between existing economic organizations in Europe which would “respect European economic unity and secure the interests of all countries through the principle of non-discrimination and

³⁴ AAN, KC PZPR, XIA/ 87, Note on our opinion on conference on security and collaboration, p.366.

³⁵ Protocol from the Polish – Soviet talks in Moscow, 1-3 October 1969 in: *Tajne dokumenty...*, p. 601.

mutual benefit,” the elimination of barriers in economic exchange between European countries, and the activation of the United Nations European Economic Committee. There was a suggestion to create a special group to prepare a more detailed project. The document also pointed out that the Soviet position that held that a preparatory meeting with the participation of all concerned countries was unnecessary, was difficult to defend, as the Western countries perceived such a meeting as being the first stage of the conference. Document drafts were attached to the memorandum. They suggested that the conference should be composed of three commissions on security questions, economic collaboration, and cultural and scientific collaboration.³⁷

Bilateral consultations in Moscow, which took place on 16-17 October, were the next step in the Polish-Soviet dispute. The Poles went to Moscow to gain assurances that during the forthcoming foreign ministers meeting and at the European conference “the question of recognizing and respecting territorial integrity would be placed as an issue crucial for security.” If convincing Moscow appeared impossible, the Polish delegates were to inform the Soviets about the Polish reasoning, which made Moscow’s conception of a European conference “*unacceptable to Poland*.”³⁸ The Moscow talks were difficult as the Soviets urged the Poles to abandon their point of view and, as Wolniak wrote: “[The Soviets] presented an ultimatum: in the event that no agreement could be reached on a common Polish-Soviet position (it was the Poles who would not accept the Soviet argument), there would be no point to meeting in Prague with the other ministers.” Questioning the draft documents passed by the Polish ambassador to the MID,

³⁶ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Memorandum.

³⁷ AAN, KC PZPR XIA/246, Project of the Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe, September 1969, p.208 f.

³⁸ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Note on Moscow consultations with V .Semenov on the bloc program for the European conference, by Z. Wolniak, 19 October 1969. Minister Józef Czyrek told me, that during one of the meetings with Semenov (probably this one) Wolniak told, that Poland is no longer “a misshapen bastard of the Versailles Treaty” – it is quoted words used by Vyacheslav Molotov on 31 October 1939 at the Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Council of the USSR to announce that Poland ceased to exist. Poland was attacked by Germany (1 Septembr 1939) and next by the Soviet Union (17 September) according to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact from August 1939.

Semenov said that Polish borders were guaranteed by the Potsdam Agreement, the Soviet Union, and the other bloc countries, which ought to be sufficient.³⁹ He also repeated a few times that the Polish position could cause the talks at the conference to break down. Wolniak kept the line prepared by the Ministry. He requested that the Soviets introduce to the preamble of their draft document on a renunciation of the use of force, specifically in the section that mentioned mutual relations, language to the effect that international relations would be based on ‘respecting the principle of sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, independence of all states, and non-interference.’ The Polish government also suggested adding to the main text of the document a section citing the ‘recognition and unconditional respect for territorial integrity of the European states *in their existing borders*.’ Semenov would not accept the bolded phrase as it would change the conference into a peace conference. Semenov finally agreed to the change to the preamble, but not to the main text of the Soviet draft declaration. He suggested changing the Polish formula into a new one that spoke of “...in view security in Europe, in this shape as it was created and exists now”.

Neither did the Poles agree to the wording of the draft announcement of the forthcoming Prague foreign ministers meeting, which was to be distributed by deputy ministers. The formulation obliged the Poles to fall in line and prevented them from presenting their own ideas.⁴⁰ Wolniak asked Semenov to explain the ‘intent of the wording’ suggested by the Soviets, but Semenov “evaded answering, started to demonstrate nervousness which practically meant the end of talks.” Semenov did not propose any further consultations on the agenda of the conference or the common final declaration of the forthcoming meeting in Prague. The Poles were similarly unsuccessful with regard to the economy. The Polish

³⁹ For the Poles this argument was not enough strong as i.e. Khrushchev in 1957, when he wanted to force the Polish leadership to abandon their ideas concerning i.e. economic relations with USSR, told that the final borderlines would be decided during a peace conference and it can be changed, see: W. Jarzabek, ‘*W sprawach niemieckich...*’, p.125.

government had hoped that it would be able to gain support for some of its ideas, but the Soviets did not even agree to create a working group on economic problems. They argued that they were not prepared for discussions and that in the present situation were not interested in that type of cooperation. The Polish delegates were astonished, as two weeks earlier in Warsaw they had been told the opposite.

The Poles also told Semenov that at the next deputy ministers meeting they would like to speak about their draft and planned to put it up for discussion. The Soviets asked Wolniak not to insist on this point, but he refused.

Polish diplomats began to look for support from other bloc countries, especially from those which they thought would share their interest in securing the borders. On 23 October, Wolniak went to East Berlin for bilateral consultations with the GDR deputy foreign ministers Peter Florin and Herman Axen.⁴¹ Wolniak wanted to convince the East Germans of the Polish position – which was to support the idea of supplementing the Soviet draft declaration on the renunciation of the use of force by unconditionally respecting the sovereignty of all European countries in their present borders, and to support the idea of discussing the Polish draft treaty on security and cooperation in Europe during the Warsaw Pact meeting in Prague. Perhaps the Poles expected that—like during the February 1967 Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers Conference—it would be possible to cooperate with the East Germans against the Soviets.⁴² But the East Germans refused, and their answer used arguments similar to Semenov's. The note on Polish–East German consultations was prepared after the Moscow deputy ministers meeting, and Wolniak noticed, with certain irony, that this refusal was characteristic of the GDR: later, in Moscow, the East Germans changed their views when the Soviets did so, and agreed to support some Polish ideas.

⁴⁰ A habit in the Soviet bloc included that announcements ending multilateral meetings were usually prepared before the end and consulted by all the participants in bilateral talks. During this stage of consultations, it was possible to change them.

⁴¹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.60/77, v.1, Note on consultation in Berlin, by Z. Wolniak, 25 October 1969.

The next council of East-bloc deputy ministers gathered in Moscow on 26 October. The Polish delegation came a day earlier to meet with Semenov and his staff and once more tried to convince them to accept an alteration concerning the borders. As the Polish Deputy Minister Winiewicz wrote: “the discussion with Semenov was in many parts visibly unpleasant. He presented the Soviet position very firmly.”⁴³ But finally retreating to a decision received from the leadership, Semenov accepted the Polish point of view. When he made the reservation that in case of Western resistance they would have to give it up, Winiewicz remarked that if documents concerning a European conference were accepted by the Warsaw Pact foreign ministers in Prague, it would mean that they ceased to be just Soviet documents and began to be resolutions of the whole bloc, and thus the bloc had the right to decide the future of the documents. In the discussion with Semenov, Winiewicz also mentioned the question of the Polish draft for a “Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe”.⁴⁴ Semenov was avoiding talks on this issue but Winiewicz was persistent, returning to this subject repeatedly. When the CPSU CC accepted it, Semenov announced during a plenary session that the Polish draft for a “Treaty on European Security and Cooperation” was compatible with the declarations from Bucharest (1966), Karlsbad (1967), and the Budapest Appeal (1969), and that the Soviet Union would support the proposal if the Polish side were to submit it for discussion at the conference.⁴⁵ The Poles were allowed to pass it on to the bloc countries. However, only the basic principles of the treaty (not all the relevant documents) were distributed to the participants with request for remarks.

In unofficial talks among the Warsaw Pact countries, the Polish draft was supported by some other countries and as Winiewicz noted: “partly and not in a

⁴² W. Jarzabek, “*Ulbricht Doktrin oder Gomulka Doktrin*”? ..., p. 98f.

⁴³ AMSZ, DSiP c.60/77, v.1. Note from the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers in Prague, by J. Winiewicz, 26 October 1969.

⁴⁴ Polish Proposal for the Conference on Security and Disarmament, in: *A Cardboard Castles?*..., p.350f.

⁴⁵ AMSZ, DSiP c.60/77, v.1. Note from the meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers in Prague, by J. Winiewicz, 26 October 1969.

direct way even by the East German deputy minister.” Minister Kohrt also told Winiewicz that for the GDR documents were not important, rather that participation in the conference was what mattered. Winiewicz reminded him that Poland also used to protect also GDR interests in international relations and provided him with a number of examples.

Pending an official meeting of deputy foreign ministers in Moscow, the borders issue was not discussed. During the plenary session, Semenov pointed out that some amendments had been introduced to the documents, especially those concerning recognition of the territorial integrity and the declaration on the renunciation of the use of force. He did not mention the Polish role in it. Nevertheless he made a remark that the tactics of the bloc countries should be subordinated to Western reactions, which could make any agreement for convening a conference dependent on either the inclusion or exclusion of the border issues.⁴⁶ Minister Kohrt said that the bloc countries should be bound by their common interest, and that countries undertaking individual actions should respect the five conditions of normalization agreed to in Warsaw in February 1967. In this way he made an allusion to the independent Soviet and Polish initiatives towards West Germany. Other countries also presented their ideas. Winiewicz presented the results of the Polish talks with Western diplomats, underlining that some of them were very much interested in economic issues and suggested that in Prague an experts’ group dealing with this subject should be created. The Poles were of the opinion that the Soviet proposal was too general. But the Soviet Union visibly evaded making any decisions on this problem.

The meeting represented a partial success for the Poles, as at least some of their remarks were accepted. Yet they still intended to convince the Soviets to hold formal discussions on the Polish draft treaty. During later bilateral consultations, the Soviets agreed to discuss some of the Polish suggestions at the foreign ministers meeting in Prague, but they refused to place the Polish ideas for

economic cooperation up for discussion. But it soon appeared that the other countries did not submit their remarks to the Polish treaty. This was also a method of slowing the process of discussing the inconvenient Polish draft. Warsaw was aware of geopolitical realities and wanted to use opportunities that political and military organizations could provide in a divided world. Thus it attempted to convince the Soviet Union and the other bloc countries to agree that the treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe would be presented as a Polish draft, supported by the whole bloc, expecting that this way it would be treated more seriously in the West and have a better chance of becoming reality.

On 30-31 October 1969, the foreign ministers met in Prague and accepted the documents prepared in Moscow. In an unofficial meeting, the issue of the territorial status quo was brought under discussion by Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jan Marko. He suggested dealing with this issue in a tactical manner. Marko was supported by the Romanian Minister Corneliu Mănescu. The reaction of the Polish Minister Jędrychowski was “sharp,” as he described it, and the other ministers withdrew their suggestion to discuss the issue again. Nevertheless, during the plenary session, Marko mentioned that questions which would make starting the conference more complicated should not have been placed into the agenda.⁴⁷ Finally the Moscow documents were accepted. The ministers also developed a formula concerning participation. They declared that they would not oppose American or Canadian participation, but the participation of both German states be a condition. The idea of creating a group of economists was supported by the Hungarians who proposed to organize a meeting in Budapest. It was decided that Hungary would present more specific ideas for the agenda and exact times for a meeting, so Jędrychowski felt that at least the Polish idea to discuss economic issues had been accepted. The Polish draft for the “Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe” was not discussed, as some countries said that they

⁴⁶ Ibid.

needed more time to study it. It was clear that many of them had different political priorities, and it is also possible that the USSR, not interested in discussing this draft, had asked some of the other countries to give a pretext for a postponement of this issue. An evaluation of the Polish proposal, found in the East German archives, argued that the proposal would make a first European security conference more difficult to convene, and putting the Polish draft under discussion would divert attention from the more realistic proposal made by the Prague conference of bloc foreign ministers.⁴⁸ Documents accepted in Prague were divided into two categories. The announcement was to be published, but the draft declaration on the renunciation of the use of force and the proposal for economic cooperation were not to be made public, only passed to the Western countries through diplomatic channels. In the announcement, two topics were proposed for the conference agenda: a discussion on the renunciation of the use of force and the development of economic and scientific cooperation, which was deemed to be the beginning of further talks on other problems. Polish formulations about the recognition of existing borders were adopted in the draft declaration on the renunciation of the use of force.⁴⁹

The Soviets, together with certain other bloc countries, were trying to prevent a number of issues important to Poland from entering into the agenda. They rationalized this by saying that Western countries would not agree to discuss them during the conference. But the conclusions derived by Polish diplomacy were different. Polish leaders and diplomats were aware of the rather skeptical Western attitude toward the conference and of common suspicions of Soviet intentions, but also of the many differences within Western attitudes. The US was, for example, perceived as a country not interested in convening a conference; by contrast, the small European countries had considerable interest in such a meeting,

⁴⁷ AMSZ, DSiP, c.61/77, v.1, Note from the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Prague, by S. Jędrychowski, 3 November 1969.

⁴⁸ East German Evaluation of Polish Proposal for a European Security Treaty, 13 November 1969, in: *A Cardboard Castle...*, p.354.

as they had also set their hopes on the conference. Diplomacy led the Polish government to the conviction that the West was interested in general in a broad agenda. Poland did not want the conference to start in such a limited form and was afraid that the idea could be misused if the conference was defined by the agenda arrived at in Prague. Some Polish documents justified the opinion that Poland should persuade its Western interlocutors that further discussion on agenda was still possible. Polish diplomats also indicated that what was needed was Western support for the conference idea and a readiness to begin talks. It seems Warsaw decided to inform Western countries of its draft of a treaty on security and cooperation in Europe at this time.⁵⁰

On 18 November 1969, the Polish ambassador in Washington, Jerzy Michałowski, handed Martin Hillenbrandt, the assistant undersecretary for European Affairs at the State Department, the bloc documents accepted in Prague. Hillenbrandt said that the United States was of the opinion that it would be better to deal with some specified problems as SALT, Berlin, USSR–FRG or Poland–FRG relations on a bilateral basis first. A large conference was premature and the “watery and vague” Prague documents confirmed this position. Michałowski tried to convince his counterpart that the bloc proposal from Prague “indicated bloc openness and invited discussion.” He also spoke about the Polish ideas included in the draft treaty prepared in Warsaw, which were much more comprehensive in scope. The Polish ambassador visibly wanted to persuade his counterpart that US support for the conference would be very important, and the best way “to prove that there is sense in convening a conference would be to start preparatory talks.” He also said that a positive response given during the NATO session in Brussels

⁴⁹ All documents published in : *Biuletyn Tygodniowy MSZ*, No. 45, 8 November 1969.

⁵⁰ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 60.77, v.1. Western reaction to the conference proposal. Summarizing note, 5 December 1969.

planned for December 1969 would serve this aim.⁵¹ The Poles were certain that the US attitude would be decisive at that time.

From the diplomatic talks and analysis of the international situation, Polish policymakers began to realize that there were few chances to start the conference quickly.⁵² They were of the opinion that the United States was the main “braking power,” which wanted the conference to be a culminating moment for East–West talks on European matters and prioritized bilateral talks, first among them talks with the Soviet Union on strategic arms limitation and the Berlin issue. Bilateral talks with France led to the conclusion that at the time Paris was mostly afraid that a conference held prematurely could actually deepen East–West divisions. France too preferred to prepare for a conference through bilateral talks, among them between East and West Germany. The talks also proved that the Prague announcement and agenda proposals were seen as too general and failing to address critical security questions, especially the disarmament problem (which the Poles wanted to include, but Moscow did not). Western diplomats also seemed to suggest that problems in economic collaboration could be solved by the European Economic Commission of the United Nations. Moreover, some formulations of the draft declaration on the renunciation of the use of force were perceived in the West as a Soviet attempt to gain recognition for the “Brezhnev Doctrine.”⁵³ But it also appeared that it would be possible to find satisfactory wording for the recognition of the European status quo, although this would not mean *de jure* recognition of the GDR. After the NATO announcement in December 1969, it became certain that the West expected the conference to be better prepared to accept important resolutions, and not just serve as propaganda tools. This argument was used by the Poles in their talks within the bloc.

⁵¹ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 60/77, v. 1. Dispatch from Washington, Michałowski to Jędrychowski, 19 November 1969.

⁵² Western reaction to the conference proposal, *op. cit.*

The second phase of preparatory talks

At the beginning of 1970, the foreign ministry was occupied with two main goals: conducting talks with Bonn on concluding a bilateral treaty, and propagating the idea of a broadened future conference promoting the “Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe.” It became clear to the Polish leadership that official preparatory talks for the conference were dependent on finding solutions to international problems. After distributing the basic principles of the “Treaty” among the bloc countries during the Moscow meeting in October 1969, Poland waited for comments. The East Germans were the first to send theirs, in February 1970.⁵⁴ They argued that it would be better to use the formulation of the United Nations Charter to clarify the questions of renunciation of the use of force, respecting sovereignty, and non-interference into domestic affairs in order to avoid eventual discussions with the Western countries. East Berlin also expected Poland to introduce changes to the suggestion of having consultations in situations ‘endangering peace.’ The East Germans were afraid that it could legitimize interference into the domestic affairs of the socialist countries if their internal situation would be deemed a “danger to peace” by the West. The third comment concerned disarmament. The GDR expected the number of American forces in the West Germany to be reduced if steps leading toward regional disarmament were undertaken.

The Hungarians analyzed the Polish proposal and stated that they would support it, but that in their opinion the proposal ought not be discussed during the first European conference. The Romanian reaction was perceived by Warsaw as positive in general, but Bucharest did not want any of documents to be considered as a bloc proposal (neither on the Eastern nor Western side); they preferred more independent activity of states during the conference and suggested to stressing the

⁵³ Ibid.. Brezhnev Doctrine, announced in Warsaw in November 1968 spoke about limited sovereignty of the Soviet bloc countries.

⁵⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.61/77, v.1. The present attitude of the Warsaw Pact members to the Polish *Project of the basic principles of the Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, 3 July 1970.

ties between security and economic collaboration. Bucharest wanted any form of interference into domestic affairs to be condemned. Romania was the only bloc country which asked for the entire Polish draft and declared readiness for bilateral consultations and closer cooperation. Some of the remarks sent by the other bloc countries were later included in the new version of the Polish draft treaty, but not softening their attitude toward the status quo.

Before the next Warsaw Pact ministers meeting in June 1970, further bilateral Polish–Soviet consultations took place in Moscow (1-2 April 1970). According to instructions prepared in the foreign ministry, the Polish delegation led by Deputy Minister Winiewicz was to focus Soviet attention on some ideas which would broaden the agenda of the conference, e.g.: regional disarmament, institutionalization of European cooperation, and the idea of not limiting plans to one meeting, but calling it the beginning of a series of conferences. Winiewicz also stressed the need to prepare draft documents on collective security and economic collaboration and present them to the West.⁵⁵ The Polish delegation also provided the Soviets with a new version of a plan on freezing nuclear armaments in Europe. Deputy Minister Ilichev declared Soviet readiness to support the idea of the institutionalization of European cooperation and the idea of continuing dialogue through a series of conferences. It was at that point obvious that it was unlikely that the conference would be convened quickly, and that the West expected consultations and preparatory talks on the agenda first. The Soviet position on the scope of the conference changed somewhat in order to meet Western expectations, but this did not mean that Moscow wanted Poland to play a central role in bloc activities. Ilichev suggested two possible ways of dealing with the Polish proposal for a treaty on security and cooperation: presenting the treaty by the Poles at the first European conference or discussing the project at the forthcoming meeting of the foreign ministers. (A handwritten note probably made by Minister Jędrychowski on the report indicates the Poles were afraid that the

bloc ministers would forbid Poland from presenting the entire draft, which cited bloc solidarity). The Soviets also said that they spoke with Finland about creating an 'initiative group' which would discuss the preparatory steps to the conference with the other countries. This idea was born at the beginning of the year, and Poland was asked to become one of the participants besides Finland and Belgium. Ilichev also stated that questions which did not serve the interest of the bloc as a whole should be excluded from the Polish draft for economic cooperation, but agreed that a separate meeting in Budapest would discuss it. Summarizing, Winiewicz noted a Soviet readiness to speak about a wider agenda for the conference, which was the main aim of Polish authorities, but also visible resistance to state specifics of the potential economic and scientific cooperation and present them to the West.

Moscow had agreed on an expert discussion of the economic dimensions of a future European conference. During a meeting organized in Budapest in April 1970, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland seemed to be the more "liberal" among the bloc countries. According to the Polish report on the conference, the Poles were the most active, who suggested starting talks at an advanced level that concentrated on details.⁵⁶ According to the Polish experts, the Hungarian draft concentrated too much on building European infrastructure (creating a common pan-European energy system, building train and road networks), omitting, or treating only in a very general way, questions of trade and industrial cooperation. They were also of the opinion that some aims mentioned in the Hungarian draft were not realistic, e.g. attempts to stop Western European integration. The chief of the Polish delegation noticed that it appeared that the Hungarians were satisfied with the Polish criticism, suggesting that they probably consulted with Moscow about the proposal and had been forced to withdraw the more adventurous ideas. The Soviet attitude was reserved, and the Polish experts noticed that in general the

⁵⁵ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.28/76, v.14, Note on consultations in Moscow, by J. Winiewicz, 4 April 1970.

Soviet delegates seemed to be unprepared. Their doubts concerned, among others, Polish ideas for financial cooperation, e.g., creating a European investment bank. The only country completely opposed to any kind of closer East-West economic cooperation was the GDR, which presented the opinion that COMECON should be strengthened first. The Polish delegate had the impression that East Berlin preferred to keep some trump cards for its talks with West Germany.

It soon appeared that what had been hoped for by Winiewicz, i.e., Soviet willingness to broaden the conference agenda, was merely a feint. In June 1970 during the deputy foreign ministers (19–20) and ministers of foreign affairs (21–22) meetings, the Poles tried in vain to convince the other bloc countries to discuss the “Treaty on Security and Cooperation” at the first European conference. Jędrychowski was correct in thinking that if the project was discussed by all of the bloc countries, this would prevent its realization.⁵⁷ Nearly all the countries (the Romanian attitude was the exception) declared that it was better not to go beyond the goals of the 1969 Budapest Appeal. It was decided only to broaden the Warsaw Pact’ Prague Declaration by adding cultural and environmental cooperation. The bloc countries announced their agreement to start talks on foreign troop limitations and readiness to create a committee on security questions as a result of the first conference (which had also been included in the Polish draft treaty).⁵⁸

The Treaty of Moscow with West Germany was concluded in August 1970, followed by the Treaty of Warsaw in December. For Poland, the ratification of the Treaty of Warsaw with West Germany and the establishment of diplomatic relations had become the main short-term foreign policy goal. The Warsaw government expected that after completing ratification, it would be easier to place the issue of border recognition on the conference agenda. But in the aftermath of

⁵⁶ Report from the economic experts meeting in Budapest, by Z Kamecki, 29 April 1970, in: W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 218 f.

⁵⁷ Note on consultations in Moscow by J. Winiewicz, 4 April 1970, *op. cit.*

the treaties there was no visible change in the Soviet attitude toward the other issues, and Polish diplomats were still faced with strong Soviet objections toward plans for great advanced trade and industrial cooperation. The Polish experts deliberated the idea of a general European Treaty on Economic Cooperation, including, e.g., cooperation in the patent and licensing branch as well as a harmonization of trade rules. The Soviets were not enthusiastic about the idea and implied that there was a danger of “becoming dependent on the capitalist countries” if the Polish suggestions were accepted. The Polish proposals were in fact aimed at finding possibilities for limiting their economic dependence on the Soviet Union, which would facilitate Poland’s and the other bloc countries’ opening to the West. Of course, this would also change attitudes toward security issues and influence the Soviet bloc’s integrity, weakening the interdependence of the bloc countries and their ties with Moscow.

After personnel changes in the Politburo and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which took place as a result of Gomułka’s downfall in December 1970, attempts to broaden the scope of the conference continued.⁵⁹ During one of the next meetings of the foreign ministers in Bucharest in February 1971, the Polish delegation returned to the idea of economic cooperation. Poland also wanted to deal with the question of regional disarmament, but the Soviet government suggested focusing on tactics and not presenting too many ideas that were “difficult for the West.”⁶⁰ The Polish and Soviet expert consultations at the beginning of February 1972 did not bring any changes either. It seems that these were the last major Polish attempts to convince Moscow to support a conference. Soviet unwillingness to discuss the details of economic collaboration was probably connected with the fear that the bloc countries could receive greater opportunities, to pursue more

⁵⁸ AMSZ, DSiP, c.61/77 v.1. Note on the Foreign Ministers meeting in Budapest, by S. Jędrychowski, 29 June 1970.

⁵⁹ Gomułka was replaced by a new first Secretary, Edward Gierek, after strikes and riots in December 1970, but there was no visible change in the Polish attitude to the CSCE that time.

⁶⁰ AMSZ, DSiP, c.62/7, v.1. Note on the Foreign Ministers meeting in Bucharest, by S. Jędrychowski, 20 February 1971.

independent economic and foreign as well as domestic policies. In the first half of 1972, Poland still tried to draw Soviet attention toward questions of disarmament in Europe, but the Soviets answered that this issue was related to ‘general power sharing’ and could not be treated separately. Nevertheless, they found that a reduction of forces in Europe, limiting military maneuvers, and creating ‘spheres of military détente’ at the frontier between blocs as possible topics for discussion during the European conference.⁶¹ The change in Soviet attitude occurred at the end of the year. In October 1972 in discussions with Deputy Minister Józef Czyrek concerning a future conference in Moscow, Soviet Minister Rodionov mentioned the question of arms reduction, which was of major interest to many Western countries as it was one of the more controversial: the Soviet Union, he stated, would prefer to keep this topic outside the conference talks.⁶² In short, the Soviets changed their position, deciding that they would not support a discussion of military détente questions at the CSCE, causing the Poles to abandon further efforts in this regard after 1972.

After the ratification of the bilateral Polish-German treaty (and the Treaty of Moscow) in May 1972, the Poles were of the opinion that very important elements of European security had been settled in part. The new Soviet draft of a “General Declaration,” prepared for the conference and passed to the Polish side in September 1972, stressed the principle of recognition and non-violation of borders in Europe, and treated as an act of aggression any attempt to call into question the territorial integrity of a state, included formulations which were present in the Polish documents prepared in 1969.⁶³ During the consultation at the deputy foreign ministers meeting in Moscow on 15 November 1972, the Soviets submitted their document on principles for economic cooperation, which was to be

⁶¹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.63/77, v.1. Note on Political Consultative Committee meeting in Prague, by S. Trepczyński, 28 January 1972.

⁶² AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.45/77, v.13. Note on consultations with the Deputy Minister N.N. Rodionov, by J. Czyrek, 13 October 1972.

⁶³ AMSZ, DSiP, c.63/77, v.1. Note on Soviet proposals by J. Czyrek, 7 September 1972.

presented in the future through the diplomatic activities of the bloc countries.⁶⁴ According to the Soviets, this document was a very general outline due to the fact that during the conference the Soviets wanted to give priority to political issues. They also announced that the main aim of the conference should be ‘creating a good climate for developing economic collaboration in bilateral relations.’ Several topics presented by the Poles during bilateral Polish-Soviet talks in the fall of 1971 were included in the Soviet draft, but not the most important from Warsaw’s point of view, such as industrial cooperation, building a pan-European transport and water network, and facilitating trade. But there are no signs that the Poles wanted to force their ideas at the time. Difficult, long-lasting negotiations on broadening the scope of the bloc proposal did not find success, although a few Polish ideas were to be found in the documents prepared by Moscow.

When Polish preparations for the European conference began, humanitarian issues were not taken into consideration. As mentioned previously, the Polish draft “Treaty on Security and Cooperation in Europe” spoke of developing cultural and scientific collaboration. But at the beginning of the 1970s, the issue of the free flow of ideas, individuals and information was raised in Polish bilateral talks with Western diplomats. Soon this issue assumed greater significance. The Polish-Soviet bilateral talks in January 1972, in fact, were devoted mostly to this topic. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Mashetov presented the opinion that the bloc countries should present their own draft proposal on cultural cooperation as an answer to the Western views. The Poles suggested preparing a declaration that could be discussed during the conference and as a way of strengthening collaboration within UNESCO, but the Soviets opposed it. Mashetov said that there was a danger of paying too much attention to cultural cooperation. The conference work might end up concentrating on cultural matters, not political ones, and it was possible that in the end, only a declaration on cultural

⁶⁴ AMSZ, Dep.IV, c.45/77, v.15, Note on Deputy Ministers Meeting in Moscow and Note on the Soviet project of document, by J. Bisztyga, 17 November 1972.

collaboration would be acceptable for all participating countries. It was agreed that Poland should prepare a draft declaration on cultural collaboration.⁶⁵ Finally Poland (together with Bulgaria) presented a common bloc proposal during the first phase of the CSCE in 1973, but it had been specially prepared by the Soviets and sent as a final document to the Poles.⁶⁶ This draft was not accepted as a basis for future negotiations by Western countries.

2. From the Multilateral Preparatory Talks to the Helsinki Final Act

Main Areas of Polish Activity

The Polish delegation to the Multilateral Preparatory Talks, which began in Dipoli (near Helsinki) on 22 November 1972, was led by Ambassador Adam Willmann. Instructions for the Polish delegation warned of the danger of treating the conference as a place of rivalry between two systems.⁶⁷ The Polish Foreign Ministry expected that in discussing rules of the international order, the Western countries would be interested in giving priority to the principle of sovereignty and non-interference and not to the territorial status quo and respecting borders. Moreover, they would try to bring up the question of individual freedoms, and a freer flow of people, ideas, and information, which could later be used for “ideological infiltration.”⁶⁸ Warsaw Pact documents were treated as the basis for discussion and the “Polish aims” were described as “emerging from the national interest of Poland as a member of the socialist community.” But there is no

⁶⁵ Note from talks with W. W. Maszetow, by J.Czyrek, 25 January 1972, in: W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 223 f.

⁶⁶ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c. 47/77, v.17, Dispatch from Helsinki, A. Willmann to J. Bisztyga, 26 March 1973. Willmann has written that the Soviets handed a ready proposal of cultural collaboration and asked the Ministry, if the Polish delegation could modify it.

⁶⁷ AMSZ, DSiP, c.63/77, v.3. Minutes of a conversation with the Soviets, 20 November 1972, Ibid. Instruction for the Polish Embassy in Helsinki, November 1972.

⁶⁸ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.45/77, v.15, Note: the Multilateral Preparatory Talks for CSCE. As enclosure: Actual Polish aims for the CSCE, by S. Olszowski, 2 November 1972.

wonder that after “sharp” talks with the Soviets and the other countries, “keeping an eye” on the wording regarding the inviolability of borders in conference documents was noted as a special duty for the Polish delegates. Strengthening the GDR’s international position was mentioned as the second aim. This goal was derived from one of the main Polish foreign policy priorities: preventing eventual German reunification. In this case the Poles wanted to prevent the possibility of the CSCE accepting any stipulation which could facilitate German reunification in the future. According to Polish foreign minister Stefan Olszowski the talks on economic collaboration would also be very important for Poland. He expected that during the conference, principles underlying bigger possibilities for economic exchange between the blocs would be elaborated, which was important for the Polish authorities looking for chances to develop the country’s economy and to higher living standards, but also trying to fulfill obligations connected with participation in GATT. This aim was also presented as being connected with the “German factor.” Olszowski wrote that the rules of economic cooperation “shouldn’t lead to a weakening of COMECON integration or attraction of the GDR by West Germany.” Many Polish politicians and diplomats shared the opinion that West Germany would try to subordinate the conference to its national interests, e.g., to lower the threshold for a final agreement, to confirm the right of the German nation to reunification, and to treat the ‘status quo in Europe’ as a *modus vivendi* in Europe, which was contradictory to Polish interests.

The Polish delegation remained in close contact with the Soviets as well as the other communist countries attending the MPT and conference. During the multilateral meetings, a general outline for action was agreed upon for every bloc country.⁶⁹ Numerous bilateral talks with the Soviets took place as well. Many Polish public announcements also received prior Soviet consultation, for example, the Polish foreign minister’s speech in Helsinki in July 1973, at the opening

⁶⁹ AMSZ, DSiP c.1/82, v.2, Note on the second phase MPT, 2nd basket, 17 April 1973.

session of the conference.⁷⁰ Stefan Olszowski has written that according to an arrangement made with the Kremlin, his speech emphasized, more than the Soviet minister's speech, the need to create a consulting committee after finishing the CSCE, building a system of collective security, underlining the issue of closer economic cooperation in the context of regional integration taking place in Europe. On the other hand, all the topics had been previously elaborated by Polish experts, who looked to the Soviets to support them. What is also worth mentioning is that the Polish diplomats participating in the MPL and CSCE were active by looking for opportunities to talk with their Western counterparts in order to promote some of Poland's ideas which were not included in the official bloc documents and which could not be discussed during the official meetings.⁷¹ Some Western delegates described the Polish diplomats as open-minded. Poland also used the opportunities provided by the gathering of so many diplomats in one place to solve some bilateral questions. For example, the conference was used to overcome deadlocks in the Polish-German talks that had occurred after the establishment of bilateral relations.⁷²

It is not difficult to determine particular Polish interests during the MPT, or the first and second phases of the conference.⁷³ Undoubtedly the most important was the border issue, and the Polish diplomats tried to convince the Soviets to accept some of their suggestions. Poland wanted the principle of respect for the territorial status quo to cite the United Nations Charter as well as bilateral treaties signed by different countries, treating them as sources of international law.⁷⁴ But the Soviets preferred to concentrate on multilateral agreements, and this opinion

⁷⁰ AMSZ, Dep.IV, c.47/77, v.17, Minister Olszowski's dispatch from Helsinki, 4 July 1973.

⁷¹ It is mentioned in interviews with the author, i.e. Min. A.D. Rotfeld in February 2007, J.Bisztyga in March 2007.

⁷² For details see : W. Jarzabek, *Die Haltung der Volksrepublik Polen zur Normalisierung der Beziehungen mit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1970 - 1975* in: *Rocznik Polsko – Niemiecki/ Deutsch – polnisches Jahrbuch*", No. 13, Warsaw 2006, p. 85ff. Bilateral talks took place in July 1973 and August 1975.

⁷³ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, v.2, Instruction for the Polish delegation on the second phase of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, by S. Olszowski, September 1973.

⁷⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.1/82, v.2, Information from MPT, No 13, 9 March 1973.

was shared by most Western states.⁷⁵ Polish diplomats conducted bilateral consultations with Western countries which presented proposals on the principles of international relations, for instance with France and West Germany. Poland was critical of German ideas, which staunchly opposed the combination of the inviolability of borders and the renunciation of the use of force. Polish diplomats were not satisfied with the formulations concerning territorial integrity, especially the fact that the issue of possible territorial claims was omitted. An interpretation that a peaceful adjustment of frontiers would be possible caused Polish protest at the beginning of the conference, but, as it became clear that it was not possible to exclude this option entirely, Poland wanted to make the border changes possible only in a few cases.⁷⁶ The Polish delegates inferred that suggestions concerning the possibility of territorial changes occurred because of West German activity.⁷⁷ So they introduced the motion that signatories of the final agreement did not have and would not make any territorial claims in the future. This wording was also acceptable for Moscow, and the Soviets supported the Poles. This was seen as a Polish success, as the clause making a peaceful change of borders possible was not included as a separate item in the “Declaration of Ten Principles.”

Polish representatives also tried to become active in work on rules for economic cooperation, but it seems like they were closer to the position held by the bloc and Moscow, as earlier. Poland presented a document on more advanced industrial cooperation on 19 March 1973. Working on this document, Polish experts generally followed the Soviet conceptions of economic cooperation and developed a phrasing satisfactory to Moscow.⁷⁸ The Polish delegates to the

⁷⁵ The Poles were told, that the West German delegation in bilateral talks with the Soviets agreed for including the principle of inviolability in exchange for the right of self-determination.

⁷⁶ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, v.2, Report from CSCE, by A. Willmann, 29 December 1973.

⁷⁷ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.20/79, v.12, Note on conversation with Ambassador J. Andreani, by A. Willmann, 27 April 1974. According to the Polish diplomat, Andreani told that during a meeting of nine Western countries the French delegation suggested changing attitude to the question of peaceful change of frontiers but it was opposed by the FRG and Great Britain. As the Polish diplomat has written “information of the chief of French delegation for the talks in Geneva about German stand to the question of inviolability of frontiers helped the Poles to prepare better for the talks.”

⁷⁸ AMSZ, Dep.IV, c. 47/77, v.17, Dispatch from Helsinki, Willmann to Bisztyga, 15 March 1973.

commission were obliged to strive for favorable trade rules and restrain from discussions on the issue of joint ventures with Western capital inside block territory. When the idea was proposed to include Mediterranean issues concerning non-European countries in the region, as well as developing countries, the Polish delegation opposed dealing with those questions. According to Polish instructions “this action should be conducted in such a way as to not complicate Polish bilateral relations with those countries.”⁷⁹

In the spring of 1974 during bilateral consultations, Soviet officials told a Polish delegation that they were thinking about combining final recommendations for economic cooperation with the most-favored-nation clause.⁸⁰ While, the Soviets wanted a MFN clause to be based on the principle of reciprocity, Western countries preferred “mutual advantages and duties.” In Warsaw’s opinion this was the Western price for MFN status. Some Polish experts felt that it would be better to exclude both, especially as Western countries would not be obliged to remove limitations on the quantity of goods imported from the Eastern countries. The Polish attitude on trade policy was described in a note from late 1974: Poland should be treated in the same way as “market economy countries.”⁸¹

In the Basket III talks the Polish delegation to the MPT and the Conference strove toward treating cultural collaboration as primary to so called human contacts.⁸² When the conference started, the Polish delegates opposed discussing some issues proposed by the Western countries which they found to be

⁷⁹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.1/82, v.2, Instruction for the Polish delegation, April 1974.

⁸⁰ Informatory note on Polish–Soviet consultations, 25 March 1974, in: W. Jarząbek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 242 f.

⁸¹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, v.3, Note on the trade sub-commission works, 20 December 1974. Poland was against formulating ‘special conditions’ for the socialist countries and was in opinion that participation in GATT sooner or later would make its broader collaboration with the West possible. The Polish expectations could not come true, as this model of economic relations included dumping danger for the West (the production costs differed too much). The Western countries imposed quotas for export from Poland, treating Poland as another Soviet bloc country, and not a “regular” GATT member.

⁸² AMSZ, DSiP, c.1/82, v.2, Instruction for the Polish delegation for Helsinki talks, April 1973. According to the instruction for April–May session of the MPT, the Poles should together with the Soviets try to limit making junctim between Helsinki and Vienna talks and eliminate the so called military aspects from Helsinki.

unfavorable from the ideological, economic, or social points of view, such as reuniting families and facilitating contact among people. This position was not caused by Soviet pressure. Rather, Polish leaders wanted to deal with the problem of reuniting families in bilateral talks, primarily with Germany at the time.⁸³ After accepting the CSCE document on reuniting families in 1974, the chief of the Department IV (Western Europe) of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused the delegation of applying the wrong tactics during the talks as a result of which this type of document had been accepted.⁸⁴ Others felt that because the stipulations recognized the priority of domestic laws, they provided many possibilities for avoiding unwanted interpretations.

The Polish authorities also wanted to avoid stipulations that would open up possibilities for easier access to uncensored press, books, or radio broadcasts. Nevertheless, they recognized that the growing importance of issues such as free flow of ideas, people, and information would be critical to reaching agreements on the other “baskets.”⁸⁵ By the spring of 1974 the Basket III and the Basket I issues started to be treated as a kind of “package deal.”⁸⁶ During the last phase of the conference, in spring 1975, Poland was actively engaged in seeking a compromise after the deadlock on the Basket III meetings.

⁸³ AMSZ, Dep.IV, c.47/77, v.17, Dispatch from Helsinki, Willmann to Bisztyga, 26 March 1973. The Soviets asked the Poles to prepare a document on reuniting families based on the Polish experiences, but the Poles were against discussing this topic during the conference.

⁸⁴ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.20/79, v.12, Remarks to the document on reuniting families, by H. Sokolak, 9 December 1974. Polish delegation was in opinion, that adopted document gives a lot of possibilities of interpretation. Dep. IV, c. 20/79, v.12. Note by B. Rychłowski, 11 December 1974.

⁸⁵ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.47/77, v.17, Dispatch from Helsinki, Willmann to Bisztyga, 25 August 1973, Information on diplomatic talks, AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, v.2, A note from business trip to Geneva, by A. Willman, 30 December 1973.

⁸⁶ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, w.2, Report from participation in CSCE talks (18 May–5 June 1974), by S. Dąbrowa.

The Helsinki Final Act

Following the conclusion of the negotiations, the PPR Foreign Ministry prepared a formal interpretation of the documents agreed on in Helsinki.⁸⁷ Most critical from Warsaw's point of view was describing, elaborating upon, and signing the ten principles of international relations, especially the final portions on the principle of sovereign equality, renunciation of the use of force, the inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity and non-intervention in internal affairs (understood in Poland, and the rest of the Eastern bloc, as non-interference). The Polish government took satisfaction in the fact that the Soviet bloc countries had managed to subordinate the formula on peaceful change of boundaries to the principle of sovereign equality, as opposed to the principle of inviolability of frontiers. Similarly important to Warsaw was the fact that in case of the Final Act, the distinction was made between the "Declaration of Principles," which referred to bilateral and multilateral treaties as sources of international law (among them the United Nations Charter), and other stipulations, which were treated as declarations of political will.

Polish officials were partly satisfied with the results of Basket II negotiations. For example, the MFN clause had been formulated in a very general way, and the reciprocity principle (although also general) had found mention. The Polish experts noted that it would probably be necessary to change Polish law concerning joint ventures and money transfers in order to facilitate international cooperation.

Much attention centered on Principle VII and Basket III. As the Basket III recommendations, among them the principle of non-intervention, were subordinated to the ten principles of international relations, they were shown as dependent on them and also upon the "stage of détente." Polish officials noted with satisfaction that, "in spite of the Western countries' desires, any formulations which could be interpreted as approving of dissident activity were included in the

stipulations.” To justify this assumption, they mentioned that the Final Act referred to the United Nations Covenants on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, which spoke not only about individual rights, but also about individuals’ duties to society; the covenants discussed the precise conditions for the implementation of rights, as well possibilities for their limitation because of the precedence of the societal interest over individual rights.” Experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hence recommended urgently examining the issue of ratifying both covenants. Analyses of the covenants credit the Polish decision to ratify the covenants to Warsaw’s readiness for compromise before the 1978 Belgrade CSCE Conference, but it appears that it was rooted in the Polish authorities’ interest in limiting the impact of the Final Act.

Warsaw saw the mini-preambles to the stipulations on the flow of ideas, people and information and the formula, which subjected the spreading of information (which also meant press and radio news) to the mutual understanding of nations and the aims accepted by the CSCE, protecting both Polish and bloc interests, and specifically as a chance to limit Radio Free Europe’s activity. The stipulations concerning family reunions were seen as relevant to Polish law.

In fact the legal stance was not a problem—the main issue was the political reality. The Polish authorities were not eager to make emigration easy, an attitude typical for all communist countries, not just Poland.

In sum, the conference had been a success, and potential dangers were underplayed, but does this mean that they were not seen? Most likely some of them were understood, but it was also anticipated, that it would be possible to minimize them using the domestic law. And in 1975 the gains were perceived as prevailing. The Polish government published the Helsinki Final Act along with First Secretary Gierek’s introduction, but according to Romuald Spasowski, the

⁸⁷ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/82, v.5, Interpretation of the decision of CSCE, 2 August 1975.

edition was withdrawn at Moscow's request.⁸⁸ It is difficult to say what actually transpired, but in the end the Final Act was published in *Sprawy Międzynarodowe* (No. 10/1975), a magazine on international relations.

3. The Follow-up to the Helsinki Conference

Towards Belgrade

Poland was deeply interested in continuing the CSCE process in the form of further talks on cooperation in the fields of energy, communication and environmental protection, as well as in the institutionalization of the CSCE process, but the Soviets withdrew their support for this last idea.⁸⁹ As the symptoms of the economic crises surfaced in Poland in the second half of the 1970s, the country became dependent on Western credits and technologies. And the authorities knew full well that the country's image on CSCE issues influenced Western attitudes on economic aid. Specifically, Polish authorities were aware of the growing importance of human rights matters. Generally, the human rights situation in Poland had been perceived as being substantially better than in other bloc countries.⁹⁰ But after 1976 the human rights situation deteriorated. In 1976 the Polish authorities began to analyze reports on human rights violations prepared by the US government. It is likely that the amnesty for political prisoners, announced just before the Belgrade meeting, was aimed at improving Poland's image as a 'liberal' country following the prosecution of the June 1976 strike participants and their defenders from KOR (the Workers' Defense Committee). People connected with KOR and other human rights groups such as ROPCiO (Movement for Protecting Human & Citizen Rights) suffered frequent harassment,

⁸⁸ Romuald Spasowski was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Polish Ambassador to the United States. He stayed in the US during martial law. R. Spasowski, *The Liberation of One*, New York; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1986, p.548.

⁸⁹ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c. 31/82, v. 7, Dispatch from Helsinki, 6 April 1976.

⁹⁰ V. Mastny, *Helsinki, Human Rights and European Security: Analysis and Documentation*, Duke University Press 1986, p.14.

and the tactics of the political police became more aggressive. For example, in May 1977 a KOR collaborator, Stanisław Pyjas, died under mysterious circumstances. Around that time the opposition started to become more organized, reminding the authorities in open letters about their Helsinki commitments. This practice caused increasing concern within the party.⁹¹ In March 1977 the United Nations Covenants on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 were ratified, in what was widely perceived as a part of the Polish government's PR campaign.

In the second half of the seventies, the United States began to be perceived as the most dangerous adversary of the Polish government in the field of human rights. Western European countries were considered more eager to accept differences between political systems and the consequences that flowed from these differences.⁹²

The bloc's preparations for the Belgrade conference reflected the new atmosphere surrounding the Final Act. During bilateral talks between Warsaw and Moscow it was agreed that the rank of the representatives should not be very high. Like the Soviet Union, Poland wanted to minimize the importance of the conference as compared to the Helsinki conference. The Polish delegation to the Belgrade CSCE conference was led by Marian Dobrosielski, the director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs. The Polish preparatory documents do not indicate that there were any serious disagreements with the Soviets regarding the agenda. The role of the Polish delegation in the negotiations at the conference was choreographed at a meeting of the Warsaw Pact countries which occurred in Moscow in May 1977.⁹³ The Poles were to prepare a draft proposal on cultural

⁹¹ On dissent movements in Poland see: R. Zuzowski, *Political Dissent and Opposition in Poland: The Workers' Defense Committee "KOR"*, Praeger, 1992, p.6 f.

⁹² AMSZ, DSiP, c.5/82, v.7, Note on preparatory works for Belgrade, 20 September 1977. But also in the United States political actor as: White House, State Department and Congress had different ideas as to the human rights importance. On American policy see: W. Korey, *The Promises We Keep: Human Rights, The Helsinki Process, and American Foreign Policy*, St. Martin's, New York 1993; Z. Brzeziński, *Power and Principle; Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981*, Farrar, Straus, Giroux, New York 1983, p.300; D.C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect...*, p. 121,

⁹³ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 5/82, v.7, Note on preparation for Belgrade, 20 September 1977.

collaboration within the field of education, e.g., school books, and common scientific groups.

Poland, however, was interested in deepening economic collaboration at this point more than ever before because of its problems with fulfilling its credit obligations. The main instruction for the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the other institutions responsible for economic cooperation was formulated by the government in March 1976 in accordance with a Politburo resolution.⁹⁴ The Polish delegation was expected to focus in particular on the creation of mixed companies, limiting tariffs, and facilitating joint research in electronics, refrigeration, and medicine. Poland expected Belgrade would be a forum for the discussion of “more advanced forms of industrial cooperation, including common technological studies, and common projects which would lead to structural ties between the economies of participating countries, which could in turn promote the materialization of détente.”⁹⁵

The Polish delegates felt that Belgrade differed from Helsinki mostly due to the activities of the Americans. In the Polish diplomats’ opinion, during the talks leading to the Helsinki Final Act, the West European countries had been often allies of the Eastern bloc, while in Belgrade the United States was able to impose Washington’s political priorities, which included human rights protection.⁹⁶ Human rights, in fact, dominated the talks. The chief of the American delegation, Arthur Goldberg, who was well known as a person engaged in defending human rights, inaugurated a new tactic: naming political prisoners being held in the Eastern bloc. The chief of the Polish delegation wrote that because of this, the expected “in-depth exchange of views appeared to be a confrontation instead.”⁹⁷ Dobrosielski attempted to sway the discussions on political topics and military

⁹⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.5/82, v.2, Resolution 54/76 of the Polish Council of Ministers (government) on implementation of the Final Act, 20 March 1976.

⁹⁵ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 5/82, v.6, Remarks to report of the Executive Secretary of UN European Economic Commission for the Belgrade meeting, 26 September 1977.

⁹⁶ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 5/82, v.7, Belgrade 1977. Estimation of results, by M. Dobrosielski, 28 March 1978.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

détente while limiting the exchange of views that could occur during the sessions. Finally he informed the Ministry that “Western attempts to turn Belgrade into a kind of tribunal, judging the socialist countries on human rights,” had failed.⁹⁸ According to M. Dobrosielski, Poland played an important role in seeking compromise by trying to act as a go-between. The Belgrade conference was presented in Poland as a success due to the fact that the Helsinki Final Act had been left unchanged.

In Belgrade the Poles also presented a project on cultural co-operation. It is probable that some element of this project failed to meet the Soviet Union’s expectations, with respect to the return of works of art from foreign museums to their countries of origin. This project was well received by both neutral and some NATO countries.⁹⁹ Poland was also very interested in promoting a document on pro-peace education which was attributed to First Secretary Edward Gierek. This proposal was not seriously discussed, but in 1978 a declaration on preparing societies for living in peace was adopted by the UN. Poland also wanted the CSCE to discuss another question connected with education: screening textbooks for ideas that were “harmful to peace and mutual understanding” or that “incorrectly depicted past events.”

During the Eastern bloc’s preparatory work for the Belgrade conference it was agreed that Poland would prepare a proposal on observers for military maneuvers, along with “a compromise proposal.”¹⁰⁰ Shortly after the signing of the Helsinki Final Act it became apparent that some countries had serious reservations concerning the observers. The first invitation extended to Polish and Soviet journalists to participate in military maneuvers was submitted by the Information Division of the West Germany Ministry of Defense on 9 August 1975. It caused a

⁹⁸ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c. 2/83, v.6, Dispatch from Belgrade, 23 December 1977.

⁹⁹ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.2/83, v.6, Dispatch from Belgrade, 7 December 1977. Some countries (France, Great Britain, and Sweden) were against the idea of giving back objects of arts, which is easy to understand. M. Dobrosielski, *Belgrad 1977*, p. 82

¹⁰⁰ AMSZ, DSiP, c.5/82, v.7, Perspectives for the Belgrade meeting and direction of the Polish activity, 20 September 1977.

great deal of confusion for the East bloc ministries. The Poles asked the Soviets for instructions, and the Soviets replied that they would not send representatives to participate in the Bundeswehr maneuvers (*Grosse Rochade*) and that it would be not good if Polish journalists accepted the invitation either, as this would set a precedent for the participation of Western journalists in East bloc maneuvers.¹⁰¹ This invitation also may have highlighted the need to promulgate documents to specify what exact forms foreign observation could and could not take.

3.2 Basket I

After the Belgrade conference, the Soviet bloc countries started to occupy themselves with preparations for a new conference planned for 1980 in Madrid, Spain. During a routine Polish-Soviet consultation at the beginning of 1979, the Soviets expressed their views about, and expectations for, the Madrid conference. In their opinion, like the Belgrade CSCE conference, the Madrid conference should have a lower level of importance than Helsinki, and the rank of the representatives should reinforce this view. They expected that the Western countries would try to employ the same tactics that they had used in Belgrade: using human rights as a means of accusing the Eastern bloc countries of violating the Helsinki Final Act. The Soviets felt that the Eastern bloc countries should not only be better prepared to defend themselves than they had been in Belgrade, but that they should also be ready to criticize Western attitudes. The Soviets were of the opinion that the conference should deal first of all with the implementation of earlier decisions, especially relating to Basket I, and also with various confidence-building measures. According to Minister Malcev, the West should be made to

¹⁰¹ AMSZ, Dep. IV, c.17/81, v.9, Exchange of dispatches between the Polish Embassy in Köln and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 20 & 22 August, 6 September 1975.

understand that organizing a conference on confidence building could have a positive effect on the disarmament negotiations in Vienna.¹⁰²

The Soviet Union was interested in discussing confidence-building measures, but it appears that they also wanted the “purely military” questions, like disarmament, to remain the sole prerogative of the major powers. Knowing that the West lent a great deal of credence to disarmament issues, the Eastern bloc attempted to steer the discussion in a favorable direction by preparing their own proposal. In the November 1978 declaration of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultation Committee, the bloc countries proposed starting talks on holding a conference on military détente. Initially, the Soviet side considered a different name for the meeting, such as “a conference on lowering military confrontation.” This idea was developed during a Committee of Foreign Ministers meeting in May 1979 in Budapest.¹⁰³ As presented by Leonid Brezhnev in his speech on 2 March 1979, the East Bloc countries suggested discussing a notification regime for movements of military vessels, and naval maneuvers, and added to the proposal air force maneuvers in regions previously planned for land forces.¹⁰⁴

The Poles actively engaged in propagating these ideas in part due to a kind of ‘tradition.’ Since the 1950s, Poland had made numerous proposals concerning disarmament. It is also possible that it was because of this ‘tradition’ that the Soviets wanted the Poles to take a lead role. It appears that Moscow was interested in starting the military détente conference before the meeting in Madrid, but it soon became apparent that this was not going to be possible. The general idea of the conference was supported by France because the French had themselves already proposed a conference on disarmament, albeit with a different agenda.¹⁰⁵ In the final document from a meeting of Warsaw Pact ministers of foreign affairs

¹⁰² At least the Soviets presented that way their aims before Madrid to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs E. Wojtaszek. AMSZ, Dep. IV, c. 4/84, v.8, Note from a bilateral Polish-Soviet consultation, 2 May 1979.

¹⁰³ AMSZ, DSiP, c.16/82, v.1, Note on the Budapest Foreign Ministers’ meeting, 14-15 May 1979, by E. Wojtaszek,

¹⁰⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.16/82, v.1, A note on talks with the Soviets, by J. Wiejacz, 3 August 1979.

in December 1979, shortly after the NATO ‘double-track decision’ (which spoke about the modernization of NATO’s nuclear weapons in Europe as a counter to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles and as a deterrent to Warsaw Pact conventional arms superiority), the conference was presented as the most urgent element of East-West dialogue. The Poles even started to consider Warsaw as a possible venue for the conference. But then the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in late December 1979 scuttled détente. Organizing the talks now became far more complicated. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union and the rest of the East bloc countries urged that the idea of convening a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe be discussed in Madrid; perhaps thinking that this might warm the chilly atmosphere that existed at that point between East and West.¹⁰⁶ In the end, it did prove impossible to organize such a conference at the beginning of the 1980s. Nevertheless during the Madrid conference (1980-1983) the CSCE agenda was expanded into the military arena as the mandate for the Stockholm conference was agreed upon.

After introducing martial law in December 1981, Poland’s global standing dramatically deteriorated. Poland was faced with a host of economic problems, and stood publicly accused of perpetrating human rights violations. Relations with the United States had plummeted. Its options within the CSCE process were very limited. In general Poland followed the Kremlin’s line, while trying to accentuate the fact that it sometimes had separate points of view. In 1984, Poland opposed the idea of arbitration at the Athens meeting, fearful that arbitration would serve the major powers’ interests and not those of the minor powers. The Polish delegation especially opposed the binding character of the decisions made through arbitration under France’s scheme. The Polish diplomats knew that the Soviet Union was ready to accept arbitration as a way of mediating some disagreements, including

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Summary of the Deputy Foreign Ministers’ Preparatory Meeting for the CSCE Madrid Conference, July 8-9, 1980, in: *A Cardboard castle...*, p. 439.

economic and scientific conflicts.¹⁰⁷ The Poles were afraid that due to arbitration there would be an opportunity to impose some decisions on smaller and weaker countries.

By the mid-1980s, the international situation had changed yet again. After the Stockholm conference on confidence and security building measures and disarmament in Europe (1984-1986), NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries opened talks on conventional disarmament. Relations between East and West had become less hostile, and the Polish domestic situation had improved to a certain degree. Taking advantage of the situation, Poland was interested in stressing its role in the bloc, in being more active in international affairs so as to overcome international isolation following the declaration of martial law. This probably led to the so-called Jaruzelski Plan of 1987. Poland's actions may have been inspired by other bloc states which had prepared their own initiatives, such as Bulgaria and Romania, both of which proposed a nuclear and chemical weapons free zone in the Balkans, and the GDR and Czechoslovakia, both of which suggested a nuclear and chemical weapons free 'corridor' in the Central Europe. It is difficult to say to what extent the East bloc countries' activities were inspired by the Soviets. In the case of Jaruzelski Plan, no available documents indicate a direct influence, but to outside observers, Poland's initiatives may have appeared strikingly similar to the Soviet Union's ideas concerning disarmament current at that time. Polish policy makers realized that in military talks, individual bloc states' options were very limited; however there were opportunities for them to participate in the discussions. In the fall of 1986 experts prepared a note on a new Polish initiative that was still being developed concerning confidence building and arms limitation first in the Baltic Sea region and later in Central Europe.¹⁰⁸ It was stressed that the Polish project should be treated as neither a simple continuation of the Rapacki Plan or the Gomułka Plan, nor as a proposal concerning only the Baltic region.

¹⁰⁷ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/88, v.2, Report of the Polish delegation, 2 May 1984.

¹⁰⁸ AMSZ, DSiP, c. 9/90 v. 1, Note on a new Polish initiative, 19 November 1986.

The experts were instructed to prepare an outline of the plan for consultation with the Soviet Union. The other bloc countries were to be informed afterwards. The outline of the plan was officially presented by Gen. Jaruzelski at a Patriotic Movement of National Rebirth (PRON) Congress on 8 May 1987. The proposal concerned nine states: Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland, West Germany, Denmark, and the Benelux countries. As written, the disarmament component of the initiative was aligned with the Gorbachev Plan of January 1986 and the program of arms limitation announced by the Political Advisory Committee of the Warsaw Pact in Budapest in 1986.¹⁰⁹ Four groups of problems were suggested for the discussion:

- 1) Nuclear arms: the gradual withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territories of participating countries down to the point of full denuclearization.
- 2) Freezing the acquisition of conventional arms which were considered “especially dangerous and which could be used for a surprise attack.”
- 3) Reviewing military doctrines in order to make them defensive in nature.
- 4) “New measures of confidence and security building,” later known as the third-generation measures.

During consultations in February 1988 between the Polish foreign and defense ministries, represented by Chief of Office for Special Matters of the Polish General Staff Colonel J. Nowak, and their Soviet counterparts, the Soviet interlocutors expressed doubts about the number of nuclear weapons slated to be frozen and “did not see the reasons for freezing conventional armaments.”¹¹⁰ They also “encouraged the Polish side to develop the sections regarding the prevention of surprise attack.”

Following the opening of negotiations between twenty-three NATO and Warsaw Pact countries on military forces and conventional arms reductions, and the conference of thirty-five CSCE countries on confidence-building measures, the

¹⁰⁹ J. Ślusarczyk, *Układ Warszawski. Działalność polityczna 1955 – 1991*, ISP PAN, Warszawa 1992, p. 89,

Poles wanted certain elements of their plan to become a part of both the “23” and “35” negotiations.¹¹¹ For the Poles, this plan was an instrument for reasserting Poland’s role in the international community. This move was also likely motivated by political ambitions, as Polish politicians wanted to remain part of the disarmament dialogue, in spite of the fact that in disarmament talks Soviet satellites were usually not able to play decisive roles.¹¹² An important aim of the plan was an attempt to pay more attention to Central Europe issues. Addressing these problems required a working definition of Central Europe, however even within the Soviet bloc, different countries favored different definitions. The Soviet Union—as the Poles were told—preferred to exclude Denmark and Hungary from the sphere of the plan’s interest.

3.3 Basket III

After the Belgrade conference, human rights continued to be an increasingly embarrassing problem for Poland. Poland and the bloc countries expected the US and its Western allies to employ a strategy during the Madrid meeting similar to the one they used in Belgrade, so they hoped to limit the time devoted to discussion of the implementation of Basket III questions.¹¹³ In bilateral talks Poland tried to convince the Western countries to abandon the question of human rights; this, however, proved to be impossible. During the conference in Madrid (1980–1983) human rights were one of the most fiercely discussed topics. The conference occurred during a very difficult time for Poland’s communist

¹¹⁰ AMSZ, DSiP, c.34/91 v.1, Note of the consultation in Moscow, 2 February 1988.

¹¹¹ AMSZ, DIE, c.36/91, v.2, A note on perspective of Jaruzelski Plan, 28 December 1988.

¹¹² The Soviet Union and Poland in the end of the eighties started to engage themselves in “a new generation of confidence building measures,” proposed elimination of the military structures of the two alliances and next establishment of a Center for Nuclear Risk Reduction and Prevention of Surprise Attack in Europe’ (Gorbachev and Jaruzelski mentioned it in Warsaw in July 1988). Different aspects of security in Europe, pursuant to a decision taken in Vienna were discussed in the group of thirty five states starting from March 1989. According to a Polish participant, the Polish delegation in Vienna made a significant contribution to the successful elaboration of an unprecedented mechanism of mutual linkage between the parallel negotiations of the ’23’ and ’35’ talks. See: A.D. Rotfeld, *Security...*, p.16.

¹¹³ AMSZ, DSiP, c.16/82, v.1, Note on the Foreign Ministers Meeting in Budapest, 14-15 May 1979, by E. Wojtaszek.

leadership. In August 1980, after strikes in many factories across the country, an independent trade union and social movement called “Solidarność” (“Solidarity”) was created.

At the beginning of the Madrid conference the Polish delegation viewed support for its proposed conference on military détente as an example of international goodwill attributable to Poland’s decision to refrain from using force against the striking workers. Nevertheless, Poland did not want the conference in Madrid to deal with the implementation of Basket III issues, and therefore tried to make it impossible for the West to receive information about the domestic situation in Poland. In January 1980, the Polish Helsinki Committee was created and started to gather information on human rights violations in Poland. The committee planned to send an opposition member, Zbigniew Romaszewski, to Madrid as a witness who could describe the situation in Poland. However, he was not allowed to leave Poland, and his passport was confiscated. In November 1980, however, a report edited by Romaszewski was delivered to the conference participants.¹¹⁴ Reports on human rights abuses, especially those that occurred after the introduction of martial law, were prepared by the Helsinki Committee and other dissent groups and sent to the United Nations, foreign parliaments, politicians, and the International Labor Organization. The persecution of the opposition in Poland was presented as a violation of the Helsinki Final Act and the Polish government’s other international obligations.

During the initial talks in Madrid in November and December 1980, Poland and the other Soviet bloc countries did not want to agree to the creation of an institution empowered to judge whether or not participating countries had complied with their CSCE obligations. Polish diplomats stressed that the Final Act was not binding under international law and that there was “interdependence

¹¹⁴ R. Zuzowski, *Political Dissent...*, p.184.

between the development of détente and progress in human rights.”¹¹⁵ This fact was also pointed out in the Polish ministerial background notes prepared shortly after Helsinki. The first session after the introduction of martial law in Poland in December 1981, was led by Poland, and the Polish delegation attempted to make discussion of human rights impossible through procedural means. In spite of their difficulties and the unwelcome international interest in the domestic situation in Poland, the Polish authorities were interested in continuing the CSCE meeting because the meeting was a way to avoid isolation in the international arena. The decision to continue negotiations and organize further experts meetings was seen as a stabilizing factor in East-West relations.¹¹⁶

The next experts meetings and CSCE conferences were not easy for the Polish participants. At the end of martial law many individual freedoms were restricted. The ranks of the political prisoners had swollen, and the size of the secret police had rapidly increased. In 1988, the number of secret police functionaries rose to 100,000, easily surpassing the figure of 80,000 at the height of the Stalinist era in 1953. Freedom of correspondence was routinely violated, and it was not even possible to discuss the concepts of freedom of speech or the press, even though within universities and some churches it was relatively easy to buy so-called “second-circulation publications” or, *samizdat* in Soviet parlance.

The Polish government was generally afraid that during the CSCE meetings it would be criticized in public and that Polish émigrés and human rights organizations would organize demonstrations featuring specific examples of persecuted individuals. Demonstrations near Polish diplomatic missions (embassies, consulates, trade representatives) became common in Western cities, especially in the United States. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs began to look for legal options to limit them by resorting to local and international law

¹¹⁵ AMSZ, Dep.IV, c.45/84, v.11, Note: The problems of CSCE principles during Madrid meeting, by A.D. Rotfeld, 6 December 1981.

¹¹⁶ *From Helsinki....*, p. 47.

concerning diplomats.¹¹⁷ Usually the Polish representatives were instructed to cite CSCE Principle VI (non-intervention) to defend themselves, but they also tried to portray Poland in a positive light by highlighting Poland's desire to improve the implementation of human rights. After the end of martial law in 1983, a majority of political prisoners were let free. Despite censorship restrictions, many publications were distributed in places like universities, as the militia (police) was not allowed to enter university campuses without a warrant or judicial sanction.

Before the Ottawa expert conference in 1985, which dealt with human rights, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared a document on strengthening the 1966 United Nations Convention on Human Rights by appealing to non-signatories to sign the convention. At the time there were 12 countries participating in CSCE which had not signed, including the US, Belgium, Greece, Turkey, and Luxembourg. The second part of the proposal concerned imposing a ban on war-related propaganda.¹¹⁸ This idea, which was most likely agreed upon at one of the East bloc meetings, was not popular.

The Polish leadership was violating human rights itself and the Americans publicized this fact. Because the Polish authorities expected difficult questions concerning political prisoners in Poland, forced emigration, (some people connected with Solidarność were given one-way passports and had no right to return to Poland) they prepared to defend themselves by speaking out about examples of human rights violations perpetrated by the United States, giving as examples the US government's treatment of Polish citizens applying for American visas. After the introduction of martial law, the visa application process had been changed. Polish citizens had to answer some questions en-masse, that is: a group of questions needed to be answered either entirely 'yes' or entirely 'no' with no room for variation or nuance. This 'block' included questions concerning infectious and mental illnesses, involvement in the drug-trade, and membership in

¹¹⁷ AMSZ, Dep. III, c.2/94, v.11, Note on legal aspects of demonstrations before the Polish institutions in the USA, without date (probably 1983).

the PUWP (Polish communist party) and its affiliated organizations. The Polish authorities described this means of questioning as humiliating. Among the people who were refused visas because of PUWP membership were Major Wiesław Górnicki, a close collaborator and adviser of General Wojciech Jaruzelski who was invited to a UN seminar on disarmament, and Professor Longin Pastusiak, who was invited to the United States by the University of Texas, and who was also closely connected with the regime.¹¹⁹

In Ottawa the Polish delegate Andrzej Towpik, who presented the official government stance, stated that there are societies in which individual freedoms dominate and those where social justice is placed at the top of the values hierarchy, and Poland belongs to the second group.¹²⁰ The Polish delegation also attempted to explain that as time passed, individual freedoms would occupy more space in society. Polish diplomats highlighted rights which existed only in Poland, such as individual agricultural and religious freedoms and tried to avoid discussion of political prisoners, the situation in Polish prisons, and the persecution of opposition members. At this meeting the Soviet bloc countries tried a new, more offensive strategy: They began to accuse the Western countries, including the United States, of violating human rights. In the tense atmosphere, it was impossible to reach any common position.¹²¹ After the end of the conference one of the Polish experts wrote with visible relief that while the negotiations had been difficult, and the limitations on human rights in the Eastern bloc countries was the main object of discussion, the USSR bore the brunt of the accusations and Poland had not “became a special object of discussion.”¹²²

¹¹⁸ AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/88, v.2, Note on Polish initiative for Ottawa conference, May 1984.

¹¹⁹ AMSZ, Dep. III, c.2/94, v.13, Visa application for the Polish citizens, Ibid., Copy of the US Embassy refusal letter to L. Pastusiak, March 1982. Ibid., Minutes of conversation with the Chancellor of American Embassy, by S. Pawliszewski, 21 August 1984.

¹²⁰ *Polska a realizacja...*, v.1, A. Towpik's speech, p. 185.

¹²¹ V. Mastny, *Helsinki...*, p.30.

¹²² AMSZ, DSiP, c.3/88, v.2, Note on Ottawa meeting, 21 June 1985 (right to emigrate, to express views, freedom of belief, trade unions' freedoms)

In the second half of the 1980's, the political situation in the Eastern bloc changed due to the Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union, attempts to improve East-West relations, and the activities of the dissident movement in the bloc. These changes also influenced the communist countries' approach at the Vienna conference. According to Adam D. Rotfeld, there were "two new elements in the socialist states' strategy; the significance of the human dimension was not questioned, attempts were not made to cite Principle VI, and Western suggestions to relax restrictions on representatives of the mass media and non-governmental organizations, and to legitimize the role of NGO's in accomplishing CSCE goals were accepted with fewer protests."¹²³

At the beginning of the conference, during the debate on implementation, Poland was criticized both for its restrictions on trade unions' activities (after martial law was imposed, a new bill on trade unions was passed which made the registration of "Solidarity" impossible), and also for jamming foreign broadcasts.¹²⁴ According to the Polish report, NATO was mostly interested in creating a control mechanism for human rights, and wanted to use the meeting to encourage changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries. The Soviet bloc countries finally agreed to discuss the question of a control mechanism, and submitted their own proposal for one.

As one of the more concerned parties, Poland criticized the idea that in the event that one of the CSCE participants demanded a meeting to examine a particular instance of alleged human rights abuse within the borders of another CSCE country, a meeting of all thirty five countries would be organized automatically. The Austrian proposal, a compromise, suggested resolving these issues in bilateral meetings, with both interested sides agreeing on a place and date. The Poles were afraid that even this compromise proposal could be

¹²³ A. D. Rotfeld, *The Vienna CSCE Meeting: A Search for a New European Security System*, PISM, Warsaw 1989, p.11.

¹²⁴ AMSZ, DSiP, c.26/93, v.1, Information note on the Vienna meeting, by T. Olechowski, 25 January 1989.

“misused” by the West to defend the political opposition in Poland, or by West Germany to bring alleged persecution of the German minority in Poland into the international public eye.¹²⁵ In spite of these concerns, the Polish delegation advised the Ministry to consider supporting the idea of international control “especially because the democratization process in Poland would cause the number of opportunities (to misuse the bilateral meetings, W.J.) to diminish.”¹²⁶ The Polish diplomats were also of the opinion that because the control mechanism would apply to Western countries as well, it might be possible to use it to criticize their visa and travel policies. During the Vienna talks the Polish delegation criticized the policy of West Germany, which treated Polish citizens living in the territories which belonged to Germany as of 1937 as German citizens to whom German law applied. This attitude concerned both people who considered themselves to be of German and Polish national identity. West Germany gave them the option of immigrating to Germany, and many people exercised these options for many reasons: national, political and economic. This last group was disparagingly called the “Volkswagen Deutsche.” The Polish authorities wanted to avoid public discussions on recognizing the rights of national minorities, especially as West Germany was the party most concerned with the issue. In the event that Bonn brought up this topic at the CSCE, the Poles discussed raising the question of individual damages for Polish citizens who were victims of the Nazi Germany during the Second World War and Bonn refused to pay them compensations as an example of German violations of human rights.¹²⁷ Bilateral Polish-German talks kept both of these sensitive topics off of the agenda.

In the late 1980s the Polish delegation was engaged in the talks and wanted to resolve some issues that were important to the average Polish citizen. Poland

¹²⁵ AMSZ, DSiP, c.26/93, v.1, Information report on the mechanism of collaboration in the human rights question and in the humanitarian dimension in the frame of the CSCE, by J.M. Nowak, 2 May 1988.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ W. Jarzabek, *The Authorities of the Polish People's Republic and the Problem of Reparations and Compensations from the Federal Republic of Germany, 1953 - 1989*, in: *The Polish Foreign Affairs Digest*, v.5, No. 4 (17)/ 2005, p.177.

wanted to introduce recommendations which would raise the level of consular, legal and medical help available for people traveling outside of their homelands. They expected Western visa policy to be liberalized and freedom of travel not to be limited to “freedom to emigrate.” The Polish delegates also presented a proposal that domestic law should be brought into compliance with both international law and past CSCE decisions. In the end this stipulation was adopted.¹²⁸

The Poles and the Hungarians, in contrast to more dogmatic bloc countries like East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, did not set up obstacles to accepting recommendations concerning the freedom of religion and the freedom to travel in the final document.¹²⁹ In Poland’s case, the position of Catholics was relatively strong and the Catholic Church had the right to participate in youth education and to organize religious classes, youth societies and holiday activities. On the other hand, before the Vienna conference during one of the bloc meetings it was agreed that freedom of religion could be discussed and the bloc countries would not oppose it. For promoting political changes in the bloc countries, the most important decisions concerned halting foreign broadcast jamming, reaffirmation of the right to the secrecy of correspondence, and recognizing prisoners’ right to humane treatment. According to one witness, the Poles became objects of criticism from some bloc countries because they were allegedly ‘selling out the interests of socialism’ because they were more open than the rest of the bloc regarding questions of passport policy, the free flow of information, and provisions for national minorities, especially by the end of the conference.¹³⁰

During a meeting held on 20 February 1989 the Polish government adopted a document entitled “Conclusions and Commitments for Poland Arising from the Final Document of the CSCE Conference in Vienna.” Among the projected decisions were: the flow of information would be liberalized by amending the law

¹²⁸ Information note on the Vienna meeting, *op. cit.*

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

on the press. “Licenses” for publishing new press titles would be replaced with registration, paper policy would be liberalized, (access to paper was restricted and only the authorities could distribute it), and faxes and satellite aerials which had previously been forbidden without official permission would be legalized. Many changes were advised in the censorship office to adapt its activity to the recommendations from Vienna. It was decided that censorship should be limited to state and military secrets. Also, the policy governing the import of foreign publications was to be gradually liberalized beginning with publications for professionals and institutions, and finally for general publications. The document indicated that there was also a need to change Polish law and introduce amendments which would facilitate the defense of accused persons, make trial procedures more just, and limit the situations in which the death penalty could be applied. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior were to prepare Polish expectations and postulates, which were to be presented to the Western countries during the next CSCE meetings. They mostly concerned travel and visa policies; reducing fees and simplification of the procedures for Polish citizens.¹³¹

What is worth remembering is that at the beginning of February the Round Table talks began between Solidarity and the ruling party. They ended in April 1989, with partly-free parliamentary elections held in June. After this election, a mixed communist–Solidarity government was created, led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the first non-communist prime minister in the Soviet bloc.

3.4. Basket II

Economic questions remained very important throughout the entire period under discussion. Western countries treated these questions as dependent on the Basket I and Basket III problems. When the international situation deteriorated at

¹³⁰ J.M. Nowak, *Poland and the OSCE...*, p.5.

the beginning of the eighties, economic policy played an important role as a tool in the new Cold War. In Vienna the bloc countries tried once again to gain greater access to Western markets and to facilitate trade with the West, especially in modern technology. Given the new political situation, they were able to gain some successes in this sphere.¹³²

Conclusions:

Polish hopes connected with the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe changed between the mid-sixties and the end of the eighties. When the idea of the conference was born, according to one of the documents describing Polish expectations: ‘the main aim of the conference was to gain West-Germany’s acceptance of the territorial and political status quo in Europe.’¹³³ The conference was treated as a quasi peace conference and the Polish authorities wanted to avoid increasing West Germany’s international stature, while minimizing the chances for eventual German reunification.

Nevertheless, Polish expectations went beyond the “German context.” The idea of facilitating economic collaboration with the West and speaking about different concepts of security can be described as aimed at changing relations within the bloc to make Poland less dependant upon the Soviet Union.

By using different tactics, the Soviet Union tried to maintain and strengthen its control over Poland. The border demarcation issue was used by the Soviets to ‘discipline’ Poland when it attempted to be more independent, and the economy was an important tool in the Soviets’ hands as it could be used as a carrot or a stick to implement Soviet policy.

Poland was also interested in broadening East-West exchange because its economic problems were difficult to resolve solely from within the bloc, even

¹³¹ AMSZ, DSiP, c.26/93, w.1, Conclusions and Commitments for Poland Arising from the Final Document of the CSCE Conference in Vienna,

¹³² Information note on the Vienna meeting, *op. cit.*

given Poland's membership in GATT, because the government needed hard currency to fulfill its obligations. Moscow's reluctance to address this problem was rooted in its awareness that the economic relations had political impact, and therefore opening to the West was dangerous not only for the Soviet Union's relations with its satellites, but also for the level of social acceptance of the communist system. It seems that Soviet interest in broadening economic and trade cooperation with the West was very limited, and that Moscow did not want the opportunities which arose from détente to be extended to its satellites, at least until such time as Moscow was able to construct new instruments of social and political control.

The opening of economic relations with the West would change Polish relations with Moscow, giving the Polish authorities more room to maneuver. But this did not mean that, at least in short term, that there would be any change in Poland's political regime. Carefully designed economic collaboration with the West could serve the regime, which was facing serious economic problems which in turn might lead to social unrest or strikes. Economic cooperation would give the ruling class greater legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Polish society at large would be served due to the rise in the standard of living. But we can not exclude the possibility of an entirely different effect - contacts with the West over the long term would change not only the character of Poland's ties with the Soviet Union, but also its domestic system. As mentioned previously, many Polish ideas concerning economic cooperation were quashed by the Soviets. Nevertheless, détente created opportunities to intensify contacts with Western countries and sign bilateral agreements. The way in which those opportunities were used is another problem.

In the fall of 1969 it became clear that the Soviet Union preferred to start the conference as quickly as possible so as to create a better climate for a more

¹³³ Present role of CSCE in the détente process. Note for S. Olszowski, 13 November 1974, in: W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 250,

active foreign policy. Because Poland treated the conference as a unique opportunity to realize its plans, the Polish leadership did not want it to be convened in haste. Starting in the spring of 1969 and up until the summer of 1970, the Poles struggled to define the shape of the conference. Poland was so engaged in peddling its ideas in negotiations with the USSR for fear that Moscow would treat the conference as a mere instrument for facilitating further bilateral talks with the US and other Western states over the head of the rest of the Eastern bloc. Had this come to pass, Moscow would have strengthened its hegemony over the bloc countries, and Poland would have failed to achieve its goals for the conference.

During this time the Polish leadership wanted to protect the state's interests even if this led to conflict with the Soviet Union and the other bloc countries. First, Warsaw tried to convince the Soviet Union to abandon its narrow vision, threatening to publicly oppose the proposed agenda. Poland stressed the need for intra-bloc consultations, expecting to receive support from the other countries for its proposal. The Polish authorities wanted the Warsaw Pact meetings to discuss the agenda of future conferences because the decisions of Pact's political structures were considered binding for every member country. Warsaw Pact acceptance and support would strengthen Poland's political opportunities. Simultaneously, Warsaw initiated diplomatic action vis-à-vis the West, especially in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands, aimed at convincing the West to the idea of gathering a pan-European conference with a broadened agenda.¹³⁴

The first phase of the conference started in 1973, when the bilateral treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland, signed in December 1970, was ratified by the Bundestag. At this point, it appeared that at least some of Poland's political aims were achieved. The Polish authorities also wanted to strengthen the border guarantees by ensconcing them in the CSCE principles of international relations, which were accepted by all of the great powers.

The communist Polish government wanted to secure its own interests as well. The Helsinki Final Act was perceived as an acceptance by the West of the political system in the East bloc countries and the ideology which ruled there. The Polish authorities expected that as a consequence it would be possible to limit Radio Free Europe's activity as it violated détente and the principle of non-interference. They tried with great determination to achieve this goal during the period of martial law, when RFE was the main source of information that was not controlled by the government.

Poland was deeply interested in continuing the CSCE process after the Helsinki Final Act. The CSCE process made Polish participation in international political life possible, and it helped to overcome some of the obstacles raised by the East-West division. It is not clear whether the Polish government was able to take full advantage of this, as in many situations it was restrained by both ideology and bloc discipline: there was a place for particular opinions but probably not for more critical objections to the Soviet point of view.¹³⁵ During diplomatic talks, Polish delegates were seen by some of their Western colleagues as less dogmatic in comparison with the representatives of other socialist states. During the first CSCE conference and the Vienna conference, Polish and Hungarian diplomats were sometimes viewed in the West as more flexible and more "forthcoming with information."¹³⁶ They did not, however, act separately from the Soviets, and Western diplomats noticed that Moscow exerted its influence.¹³⁷ One of the Polish participants wrote that the Polish diplomats involved in the Helsinki process "tried their best to initiate Polish participation in the CSCE albeit in a way that would not provoke the Kremlin or undermine the foundations of the system."¹³⁸

¹³⁴ W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 23f.

¹³⁵ Estimations and conclusions from the 2nd phase of MPT, 24 June 1974, in: W. Jarzabek, *Polska wobec...*, p. 244 f.

¹³⁶ D.C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect...*, p. 74.

¹³⁷ L.V. Ferraris, *Report on a Negotiation...*, p. 301.

¹³⁸ J.M. Nowak, *Poland and the OSCE...*, p. 5.

In my opinion, Polish politicians were more independent in their thinking when the idea of the conference was born and the discussions on a proposed agenda were conducted. During the MPT and Helsinki conference, the Polish authorities, trying to secure a particular Polish interest, decided to concentrate on the Basket I issues, (territorial status quo) and shy away from more complicated discussions and attempts to convince the Soviet Union of the cases of others, i.e. from Basket II. At the beginning of the eighties, the volume of independent Polish initiatives was limited, which was connected with the renewal of East-West tensions, as well as with Poland's domestic problems. During this time, the possibility of participating in a CSCE meeting became very important. After the introduction of martial law, Polish relations with many countries deteriorated and the CSCE meetings and the United Nations gave the authorities a chance to overcome Poland's isolation. The relaxation of East-West tensions in the second half of the eighties created more avenues for Polish political activity, which manifested itself in the CSCE process.


The CSCE process had an important impact on the domestic situation in Poland. Beginning in 1975, political opposition groups began to cite the Helsinki Final Act and demanded that the government fulfill its obligations which arose from it and the Polish Constitution. Starting in the mid-seventies, the growing importance of the Basket III issues in international relations had a strong influence on the dissident movement in Poland. Many groups ceased to be clandestine and their members' names became public. Information about persecuted persons was sent abroad and the dissidents were protected to a certain extent in that fashion. At the beginning of the Helsinki process, the Polish government, in accordance with Communist ideology, wanted human rights to be considered restricted by the individual's duty to society. Social justice (in Communist parlance) was seen as the superior value influencing individual freedoms. Human rights were to be considered one of the state's prerogatives.

As time passed, the Polish authorities modified their attitudes towards Basket III issues, even if only reluctantly. They understood the role of human matters, and human influence on the economy, trade and security questions. Perhaps they also modified their understanding of society's needs. By the end of the 1980's, the Polish authorities' engagement in talks on the liberalization of Western countries' visa and passport policies became very important to Polish society, which had begun to travel more.

One could get the impression that the Polish authorities' stance on the CSCE was unanimous; however the ruling class was not unified. According to one witness, there were strong disagreements within the ruling Polish United Workers Party. The conservative elements feared that the CSCE's focus on human rights could undermine Communist dogma, while the more liberal minded hoped that the CSCE would help to weaken the concept of 'socialist camp unity' in foreign policy, open new channels of dialogue with the West, and legitimize the degree of internal specificity and liberalization which Poland enjoyed, including private agriculture, the position of the Catholic Church, and Poland's greater freedom in the areas of culture and personal contacts."¹³⁹

In a long run, the CSCE process was an important factor promoting improvement of Polish citizens' situation, facilitating the democratic transition and finally major political change in Poland.

¹³⁹ Ibid. p. 4.



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