

**Address by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Leonid Brezhnev
to the third stage of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
Helsinki, 30 July to 1 August 1975**

We are all taking part in the final stage of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and we are aware of and feel the special nature of this event and its political sweep. It may be confidently said that this feeling is shared by millions upon millions of people in all the countries participating in the Conference and indeed beyond their borders. They and we together are taking stock of what is happening these days in Finland's capital.

What are the reasons for that attitude to the Conference on the part of the top-ranking politicians and statesmen present here?

The answer seems to be that the results of the Conference are linked with expectations and hopes never before engendered by any other collective action in the period following the well-known joint allied post-war decisions.

Those who belong to the generation which has lived through the horrors of the Second World War realise with utmost clarity the historic significance of this Conference. Its objectives also appeal to the minds and hearts of the generation of Europeans which has grown up and is now living in conditions of peace and which justly believes that things could hardly be otherwise.

The soil of Europe was drenched plentifully with blood in the years of the two world wars. Leading politicians and statesmen of 33 European States and also of the United States of America and Canada have assembled in Helsinki so as to contribute by joint effort to transform Europe into a continent which would suffer no further military calamity. The right to peace must be guaranteed for all the peoples of Europe. Naturally we stand for guaranteeing that right for all the other peoples of our planet as well.

Since it is a focal point of multiple and colourful national cultures and one of the peaks of world civilization, Europe is in a position to set a good example of building relations among States on the basis of lasting peace.

The Soviet Union regards the results of the Conference not merely as a necessary summing up of the political outcome of the Second World War. This, at the same time, is an insight into the future in terms of the realities of today and of the age-old experience of European nations.

It was here, in Europe, that aggressors time and again adorned themselves with notorious laurels, to be later cursed by entire peoples. It was here, in Europe, that claims to world domination raised to the level of political doctrine ended in the collapse of States whose resources had been made to serve criminal and misanthropic purposes.

That is why the hour has struck for the inevitable collective conclusions to be drawn from the experience of history. And we are drawing these conclusions here, being fully aware of our responsibility for the future of the European continent which must exist and evolve in conditions of peace.

One could hardly deny that the results of the Conference represent a delicately weighed balance of the interests of all participating States and, therefore, should be treated with special care.

We can say that a difficult road has been travelled so far, from the time when the idea of the European Conference was first advanced, to its culmination — conclusion at the highest level. The Soviet Union, in assessing soberly the correlation and dynamics of various political forces in Europe and the world, holds a firm conviction that the powerful currents of detente and co-operation on a basis of equality, which in recent years have increasingly determined the course of European and world politics, will gain, thanks to the Conference and its results, a new strength and an even greater scope.

The document which we are due to sign, while summing up the past is directed in its content towards the future. The understandings reached cover a wide range of most topical problems — peace, security and co-operation in a multitude of fields.

Relations between the participating States have been placed on the solid basis of fundamental principles which are to determine the rules of behaviour in their relations. They are the principles of peaceful coexistence which were fought for with such conviction and dedication by the founder of the Soviet State, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, and which are being fought for by our people even today.

The Conference has defined directions and specific forms of co-operation also in the fields of economy and trade, science and technology, environmental protection, culture, education and contacts between persons, institutions and organizations.

Possibilities for co-operation extend now also to areas where it was unthinkable in the years of the cold war. A broader exchange of information in the interests of peace and friendship among nations is an example.

It is no secret that information media can serve the purposes of peace and confidence; they can also spread throughout the world the poison of discord between countries and peoples. We should like to hope that the results of the Conference will serve as correct guidelines for co-operation in these areas as well.

The Conference has adopted a number of important arrangements supplementing political detente with military detente. This too from a qualitative point of view is a new stage in building up confidence among States.

The Soviet Union has consistently supported the idea that the Conference should be followed by a further development of military detente. One of the priority goals in this regard is to find ways to reduce armed forces and armaments in Central Europe without diminishing the security of any side. On the contrary, it could be to the benefit of all.

The special political importance and moral force of the understanding reached at the Conference resides in the fact that it is to be certified by the signatures of the top leaders of the participating States. Our common and most important objective is to bring those arrangements into full effect.

We base our position on the fact that all countries represented at the Conference will implement the understanding reached here. As regards the Soviet Union, it will act precisely in this manner.

In our view, the aggregate result of the Conference is to be found in the fact that international detente is being increasingly invested with specific material content. It is the materialization of detente which is the essence of all that should make peace in Europe truly lasting and solid. Here uppermost in our mind is the task of ending the armed race and achieving tangible results in disarmament.

It is highly important to proclaim the correct and just principles of relations among States. It is no less important to see to it that these principles are firmly rooted in present-day international relations, that they be put to practical use and made a law of international life not to be breached by anyone. This is the aim of our peaceful policy and also what we wish to declare from this rostrum.

Naturally, the very meeting of leading statesmen from 33 European States and the United States of America and Canada, unprecedented in history, should become a key link in the process of detente, of strengthening European and international security and of the development of mutually advantageous co-operation. All that is undoubtedly so.

However, if the hopes of the peoples pinned on this meeting and the decisions of the Conference are to be fully justified, and not frustrated at the first change of weather, further common efforts will be required and day to day labours will have to go on on the part of all the participating States to strengthen detente.

The success of the Conference has become possible only because the participants continuously took steps to meet each other half way and managed, after overcoming difficulties — and at times there were great ones — to work out finally mutually acceptable understandings on each of the issues involved. Such understandings were conceived and reached not through the imposition of the views of some Conference participants upon others, but rather on the basis of accommodating the views and interests of all, with general consent.

If on the other hand there are compromises, such compromises are well grounded, of the kind that benefit peace without obliterating the differences in ideology and in social systems. In other words, they are an expression of the common political will of the participating States in a form that is feasible today in the conditions of the existence of States with different social systems.

The experience of the work of the Conference provides important conclusions for the future, too. The major one which is reflected in the final document is this: no-one should try to dictate to other peoples on the basis of foreign policy considerations of one kind or another the manner in which they ought to manage their internal affairs. It is only the people of each given State and no-one else, who have the sovereign right to resolve their internal affairs and establish their internal laws. A different approach would be perilous as a ground for international co-operation.

The document that we are to sign is a broad but clear-cut platform for unilateral, bilateral and multilateral actions of States in the years, perhaps in the decades, to come. What has been achieved, however, is by no means the limit. Today it is the maximum of the possible, but

tomorrow it should become the starting point for making further headway along the lines mapped out by the Conference.

The urge for continuity in endeavour and deed is inherent in mankind. That is also true of the great enterprise which is now being undertaken by the 35 States represented here in Helsinki. This has found its reflection in the fact that a follow-up to the first Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe has been outlined to implement and expand its objectives.

Before this exceptionally authoritative audience we would like to stress most emphatically one of the inherent features of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union: the Leninist policy of peace and friendship among nations; its humanism. The decisions of the 24th Congress of our Party are imbued with the ideas of humanism, as is the Peace Programme, which called in one of its items for the convocation of an all-European conference.

We note with deep satisfaction that the provisions elaborated by the Conference on the main problems of strengthening peace in Europe serve the interests of nations; they serve the interests of people, regardless of occupation, nationality or age — industrial and agricultural workers, intellectuals, each person individually and all people together. Those provisions are imbued with respect for man and care for him, so that he may live in peace and look to the future with confidence.

The understandings we have reached here on many items expand the possibilities for peoples to increase their influence upon what is called "grand policy at a high level". At the same time they touch upon worldly problems. They will contribute to improving the lives of people, providing them with jobs and expanding opportunities for education. They are relevant to health care. In short, they are relevant to many things that concern individuals, families, young people and the various strata of society.

Like many who have spoken from this rostrum before me, we view the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as the common achievement of all its participants. Its results may be beneficial beyond the borders of Europe, as well as in Europe. The outcome of the prolonged negotiations is such that there are neither victors nor vanquished, neither winners nor losers. It has been a victory of reason. Everyone has won: the countries of East and West, the peoples of socialist and capitalist States, whether parties to alliances or neutral, whether large or small. It has been a gain for all who cherish peace and security on our planet.

We are convinced that the successful implementation of what we have agreed upon here will not only have a beneficial effect on the lives of the European peoples but also become a major contribution to the cause of strengthening peace throughout the world.

Yet another thought, which is perhaps shared by many present here: the Conference has proved to be a useful school of international politics for the participating States — particularly useful in our time, when incredible means of destruction and annihilation exist. The powerful impetus provided by this meeting of leaders of 35 States participating in the Conference is intended to help everyone in and beyond Europe to live in peace.