

**Address by East German Minister of Foreign Affairs, Oskar Fischer
on the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act
Helsinki, 1 August 1985**

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to begin by expressing our respect and gratitude to H.E. President Koivisto for his balanced and encouraging address to the participants in this Anniversary Meeting.

I sincerely thank the Government of Finland for their hospitality and for their efforts to ensure that the Anniversary Meeting goes off well. In these thanks I include the Executive Secretary of the Meeting, Ambassador Palosuo, and his associates with their judicious work.

Mr. Chairman, this meeting, convened at an historic site in Finland — a country with which the German Democratic Republic is linked through exemplary and fruitful relations inspired by peaceful co-existence and based on mutual trust — is in our view evidence of the esteem in which we hold the Final Act signed here ten years ago.

At that time, the highest representatives of all the States participating in the Conference through their signatures reaffirmed their objective of "promoting better relations among themselves and ensuring conditions in which their peoples can live in true and lasting peace free from any threat or attempt against their security".

The road embarked upon with the Final Act has, in principle, proved practicable and, without doubt, it is in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Potsdam Agreement signed forty years ago. Certainly there have been disappointments, doubts and a number of setbacks. Most importantly, however, it has been possible to preserve peace in Europe and to avoid direct confrontation. Even more, relations between States in Europe became, particularly in the second half of the 1970s, a symbol throughout the world of the possibility of relaxed and hence good cooperation between States with different social systems.

The road begun in 1975 has proved its worth because it visibly advanced the political dialogue between the participating States of the Helsinki Conference and thus heaped to lessen distrust and prepare the ground for understanding and, ultimately, confidence.

The distance we have travelled since then is, above all, an indication that stable and peaceful relations can be sustained only if political détente is combined with military detente and if approximate strategic parity is strictly preserved. This follows from the Final Act's provision on "recognizing the indivisibility of security in Europe".

It is chiefly the following results, Mr. Chairman, of the 1975 Conference that warranted high expectations:

First, the Conference signified the end of the post-war era. The Final Act reaffirmed the political and territorial realities which had come into being as a result of the Second World War and post-war developments. Multilateral recognition of the territorial status quo and acceptance of the diversity of social systems of the participating States became the mainstay of the edifice of European security and co-operation. The existence of two sovereign and mutually independent German states, with contrasting social systems, has become an indispensable element of the peaceful order in Europe.

The inviolability of frontiers and the duty of participating States to respect it "now and in the future" are a binding norm of conduct. The German Democratic Republic, directly situated at the assuredly very sensitive dividing line between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, is aware of this responsibility and is actively committed to discharging it. Hence, the emphasis placed by the German Democratic Republic on language referring to the inviolability of frontiers and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States of Europe within their present frontiers as a basic condition of peace, contained in the joint statement of 12 March 1985 on the meeting between the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED and Chairman of the Council of State of the GDR, Erich Honecker, and the Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Helmut Kohl.

Secondly, the Conference, in adopting the Final Act, opened up a new chapter of co-operation between States in Europe. Above all, the ten principles constitute the political and legal basis for the relations between the participating States; they are likewise a framework for a collective system of security and co-operation in Europe. The results of Helsinki can also prove their vitality in today's highly tense and difficult international situation. It is even clearer than it was ten years ago that common sense and realism can create, maintain and foster peaceful relations between states across social and political differences.

Experience since Helsinki has shown too that whenever the political will to peaceful co-existence was lacking and, in consequence, attempts were made to circumvent the agreed principles, not only did results fail to materialize but tensions grew and the international situation deteriorated.

Ten years of the CSCE process have demonstrated, thirdly, that what divides and in the final analysis endangers Europe and the world is not the existence of States with different social systems, but departure from agreed peaceful policies and, above all, the attempt to dispute the right to existence of the socialist system of society.

This is, at the same time, the root cause of the arms build-up and the dangerous striving for military superiority. Mankind stands today at a crossroads of its existence: nuclear arms race and confrontation or a secure life in peace.

The events of the 1970s graphically illustrated that co-operation among states can be enhanced for the benefit of all peoples, just as it is obvious that bridges are more easily destroyed than rebuilt.

And fourthly, the signatories of the Final Act ten years ago stated their determination "to broaden, deepen and make continuous and lasting the process of détente". A number of steps have doubtless been taken to that end in the past ten years.

But the fact remains: it has not been possible, so far, to extend détente to the military field. The relapse into politics of confrontation and efforts to secure military superiority, along with the deployment of nuclear first-strike weapons in Western Europe, have dangerously destabilized the situation. Meanwhile, there is a growing awareness that more missiles have in no way brought more security. The new menace — extension of the arms race to outer space — would be bound completely to destroy the basis of any security and would have devastating repercussions for the CSCE process. Unless we succeed in attaining the principal objective of the Final Act and build an enduring peace, our continent sooner or later will

become a nuclear battlefield. But in a nuclear desert, there would no longer be any question of political, economic or human contacts.

The GDR therefore wholeheartedly supports the new Soviet initiative, announced by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, to refrain unilaterally from all nuclear weapons explosions and, in the event of the United States joining in this move, to continue the moratorium beyond 1 January 1986. With this proposal the Soviet Union is again showing proof of its unswerving resolve to do everything to end the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field, and thus to preserve the future of mankind.

Mr. Chairman, the German Democratic Republic is working persistently for strict implementation of the letter and spirit of the Helsinki Final Act and for fresh impetus to détente. At a session of the Council of State dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Final Act, the Head of State of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker, noted that détente was and remained the task of our time and would be the reality of the future, since it alone could give the people in East and West, the security that was so vital today and in times to come, and could enable states to co-operate with each other in an atmosphere of trust.

The German Democratic Republic speaks up strongly against ever new weapon systems and wants to see all armaments drastically reduced and, finally, entirely eliminated. From the Geneva negotiations between the USSR and the United States, it expects, as the Foreign Ministers of both countries agreed on 8 January last, agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and ending it on Earth. The other States participating in the CSCE process, for their part, should do everything to promote a good international atmosphere and should desist from anything that might put the slightest strain on the climate of the negotiations. The GDR fully supports the proposals submitted by the Soviet Union, since they show a practicable way of reaching the agreed aims of the negotiations. The unilateral Soviet moratoriums and the temporary cessation of military counter-measures are an invitation to the other side to act.

The Stockholm Conference is assuredly a positive chance for all signatories of the CSCE Final Act to contribute to political and military confidence-building.

The GDR, in conjunction with its allies, has proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. This is also consistent with Article 1 of the Warsaw Treaty, where they have undertaken, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force. Such a treaty on the non-use of force could be accompanied by other confidence-building measures and steps.

The German Democratic Republic believes that a turn-around towards a healthier international situation is possible. That requires serious negotiations and readiness to compromise. In particular, it would mean: continuing and expanding the political dialogue between States having different social systems (where the ten principles of the Final Act serve as a tried and tested guide in this effort) with a view to working out how to prevent a nuclear catastrophe and find the way back to détente; reinforcing political détente by measures of military détente, and exhausting all means of confidence-building, for arms limitation and disarmament based on equality and equal security and the non-militarization of space cannot be achieved without a minimum degree of confidence; refraining from anything that fuels confrontation and the arms drive, and doing everything that favours mutual

understanding and co-operative endeavours between States with different social systems. Demonization of socialism, the declaration of a crusade against it, and the exertion of political or economic pressures have already shown themselves to be futile in the past. Security in our time can be ensured only through co-operation.

Finally, all the multilateral fora of the CSCE process should promote mutually beneficial relations in the areas of politics, economics, science, technology, environmental protection, transport, culture, education and other areas.

Mr. Chairman, in our conviction the Final Act remains the long-term programme for fruitful collaboration among States. Yet much can and must still be done. The debate here has provided the evidence for that. The pre-history, the course and the results of the CSCE process, have shown that will and political decision has been and remains crucial for the future of Europe.

The German Democratic Republic will continue in future to do everything in its power to ensure that this will makes progress, in a worldwide coalition of common sense and realism.

Thank you.