

**Address by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party
of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker
to the third stage of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
Helsinki, 30 July to 1 August 1975**

It is highly symbolic that the first conference of the European States, the United States of America and Canada is taking place 30 years after the peoples of Europe were liberated from Hitlerite fascism by the Soviet Union and the other States of the anti-Hitler coalition. Through its results the Conference contributes towards fulfilling the legacy of millions of sons and daughters of so many peoples who fought heroically against fascist barbarism. They laid the foundation stone for a secure and peaceful Europe.

The all-European Conference of States has no precedent in the changeful history of the European continent. Its conclusion is a success of the cause of peace, a victory of political realism and of reason. It has become obvious again that there is no alternative to the policy of peaceful co-existence.

The States assembled in Helsinki confirm the turn from "cold war" to détente in Europe. It is for the first time on our continent that with the documents of this Conference what may be called a code for the application of the principles of peaceful co-existence between States with different social systems has been agreed under international law by all participating States and solemnly sealed by the signatures of their highest representatives. By now those major problems have been solved that were a burden on the relations between States in the post-war period.

A decade ago the States of the Warsaw Treaty submitted the idea to convene a conference on European security. Today this idea has become the common cause of the European peoples, of all participating States, an achievement of historic significance. This development was promoted by the peace programme of the 24th Communist Party of the Soviet Union Congress which has pointed to new horizons. Bilateral treaties between several States have paved the way to the multilateral settlement of all-European problems and have thus established a collective basis for such a settlement under international law. The progress is obvious and of benefit to all.

As an inseparable part of the socialist community the German Democratic Republic has had its share in the set of European treaties, and has thus contributed to the successful course of the Security Conference. At each phase of this process, which was not without contradictions, the German Democratic Republic has proved that it is guided in its actions by the interest in peace and detente, and that it is a stabilizing factor for peace in Europe.

We can state with satisfaction that the content of the documents of the Conference is in agreement with the fundamental interests and the foreign-policy objectives of the German Democratic Republic. Peace and security are deeply in harmony with the character of the socialist order of society.

Mindful of the bitter experience of two devastating world wars which started from German soil, the German Democratic Republic considers it its special obligation to do all in its power to guarantee lasting peace and security in the centre of Europe. Therefore our Constitution states that: "The German Democratic Republic pursues a foreign policy serving socialism and

peace, international friendship and security.” This also determines our attitude towards the treaties and agreements concluded. We advocate their strict observance and full application in good faith.

A socialist State in the heart of Europe at the boundary between the most powerful alliance systems of our time, the German Democratic Republic accords high priority to security. It is only if security and the sovereignty of States are guaranteed that fruitful, beneficial and mutually advantageous co-operation is possible. In view of the lessons of history and the immediate requirements of European politics, respect for, and recognition of, the principle of the inviolability of frontiers is the decisive point. Security for the European States has been and continues to be in the first place security for their frontiers. The terrible wars which devastated our continent in this century were the result of policies which, no matter under what pretext, started from the violation of existing frontiers, from disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States.

Recognition of the principle of the inviolability of frontiers remains the criterion of whether or not a policy really serves peace and thus the interests of man.

We consider the unrestricted application of these principles of security to be the basic prerequisite for the development of equal, mutually advantageous co-operation. Security provides a solid basis for co-operation. The German Democratic Republic is ready to work together peacefully with all States in the economic, technological and scientific fields, in education, culture and sports.

We note with concern that military detente is falling short of progressing political detente. The arms race, if continued, could endanger the hard—achieved results of political detente. The German Democratic Republic holds the view that also on disarmament and arms limitation resolute and effective measures must be agreed which meet the interests of all and which must not create unilateral advantages for anyone concerned. We are and continue to be ready to join actively and constructively in this endeavour.

The peoples will judge the historic value and the validity of the results of the Conference on the basis of how they will be filled with life in practical inter-State relations. This will not be the work of a few days but the result of a continuous, persistent effort. In this endeavour we are encouraged by the fact that this Conference is itself an example of the varied possibilities of solving complicated international issues in the mutual interest. Nor do we overlook the obstacles still being put in the way of detente — obstacles which should be overcome with courage and determination so that the results achieved can be consolidated and improved.

Helsinki is not the final point but a prelude to new initiatives. It is our objective to banish aggression and war for ever from the lives of Europe's peoples and States. To achieve this goal, detente and work on a solid foundation of collective security in Europe should be continued. The presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his observations underline the worldwide significance of the Conference whose decisions are in line with the Charter of the United Nations. The results of the Conference provide a good basis for our foremost objective — to turn Europe into a continent of lasting peace. Such a Europe could set an example to other regions of the world, could give new impulses so that existing hotbeds of tension could be contained and conflicts solved by peaceful means. Europe as a continent of peace — that would be an important guarantee of world peace.