



**REVIEW OF  
MILITARY HISTORY**

The Review of Military History is a periodical published by the Romanian Ministry of Defence through the Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History, member of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes and national coordinator of the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

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**<http://ispaim.mapn.ro/pages/view/88>**

**B 0691/04.02.2020**

**• The Review of Military History is included in the database of the National Council for Scientific Research, category “C”.**

**ISSN 1220-5710**

# Foreword

After the end of World War 2, with the onset of the “Cold War”, Romania and East Germany (after its establishment as an independent state in October 1949) found themselves in the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union and thus their political and military relations were to be – if not completely controlled – at least considerably influenced by Moscow, which imposed the communist model of evolution in the social, political and economic fields.

On May 14, 1955, once with the establishment of the Warsaw Pact as a response to the creation, in 1949, of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the subsequent integration of West Germany into it, the two communist states deepened their dependence on Moscow with regards to state policies.

Compared to the situation in East Germany, where the Soviet army had the status of “occupation army” until the very end of the Cold War, the Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Romania in 1958, the latter being the only country to benefit from this “perk” until the abolition of the Warsaw Treaty. This event was going to visibly influence the leadership in Bucharest, which tried, in the next period, to align its national interests on the international stage, by establishing cooperative relations with both the western states and the developing ones. This “nationalization” of Romania’s foreign policy, which became even more consistent after 1964 following the public falling-out with Moscow – in the context of the geopolitical conflict between Moscow and Beijing –, gave Bucharest a very distinct profile in the communist bloc.

The often hostile attitude of the leadership in Bucharest towards Soviet hegemony was affirmed with the arrival at the helm of the Romanian Communist Party and of the Romanian state of Nicolae Ceaușescu, who often questioned Moscow’s authority and interference in the historical development of the member states of the Eastern Alliance. The falling-out culminated with the intervention of

the troops of the other Warsaw Pact states in Czechoslovakia, in August 1968, when Nicolae Ceaușescu made a dissenting note with the other European communist states and denounced the intervention as a violation of international laws and as a breach of the basic principles of the relations between states. This singular attitude within the Warsaw Pact represented a turning point in defining Romania’s position regarding the joint actions within the Alliance and in the recalibration of Bucharest’s attitude with regards to international relations. The situation that arose then in the orientation of the communist leadership in Bucharest has gone through a sinuous evolution until the end of the Cold War. Romania has come a long way, from being “the maverick ally” of the Warsaw Pact – a term coined by Western media in early 1970s – to becoming a conservative communist state in the context of the policies of perestroika and glasnost promoted by Mikhail Gorbachev since 1985.

The wave of the anti-communist revolutions in Eastern Europe put an end to the Soviet hegemony in this continental area, facilitated the unification of the two German states and consigned Romania on the path of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

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In the context of bilateral cooperation relations in the field of military history research existing between the Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History of the Ministry of National Defence and the Centre for Military History and Social Studies of the Bundeswehr, this issue of the Review of Military History provides readers the research papers presented at the joint Romanian-German seminar, held in Bucharest in February 2019, on the cooperation / collaboration relations between the Army of the Socialist Republic of Romania and the National People’s Army of the German Democratic Republic, as well as

their participation in a series of activities carried out under the Warsaw Treaty.

Although numerous historical studies and memoirs addressing Romania's participation in political-military activities during its membership in the Warsaw Treaty have been published after 1990, we consider the subject far from being scientifically exhausted. Moreover, based on the historiographical and archival documents existing in both Romania and Germany, the authors of the papers, researchers and historians in the two military research institutions, propose to the readers a mirror approach, detailing certain aspects regarding the cooperation/collaboration relations that developed between the armed forces of the two communist countries between 1955-1989, their participation in joint activities under the Treaty and the support offered to developing countries in Asia and Africa in this respective field.

The papers provide an overview of the Romanian and East German presence in the Warsaw Treaty, which have often proved to be in opposition regarding the nature of relations between states and the respect for national sovereignty.

The topics addressed are very interesting for understanding one of the less studied periods in the history of the two states, and, by means of a more thorough documentation of the existing historiographical and archival documents, given that these documents will gradually become accessible to research, they can develop or open new horizons for research and interpretation.

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# ALLIES AT A DISTANCE. EAST GERMAN-ROMANIAN MILITARY CONTACTS IN THE MIRROR OF POLITICAL RELATIONS

KLAUS STORKMANN, PhD

The Warsaw Treaty Organisation, although often abbreviated and simplified as “Eastern Bloc”, was not a monolith despite the undisputed leadership of Moscow. This is not a new insight; it had already been discussed in contemporary Western publications. In April 1946, *Der Spiegel* referred to “cracks in the monolith” in the face of the tensions that became public with regard to visits of Romanian Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer and his Bulgarian colleague Todor Zhivkov to Moscow.<sup>1</sup> “*The different manners of the Bulgarian and the Romanian describe a range of independence which does not allow Western diplomacy today to dismiss Poles, Czechs, Hungarians and Romanians as Soviet satellites out of hand. [...] The national Communist cracks in the monolithic structure of the Eastern Bloc are an immediate result of the rift between the Soviet Union and China. Since the smaller Communist parties of the Soviet Bloc have realised that the big Soviet brother is no longer almighty, they have become self-confident and impatient.*”<sup>2</sup>

Even as early as in 1964 *Der Spiegel* was right: the governments in Budapest, Bucharest or Prague were quite ready to defend their own interests. The differences were in most cases discussed behind closed doors, but sometimes they were brought to light; in the most dramatic and obvious manner when Soviet tanks in Budapest, Prague or East Berlin had to re-establish the “old” order.

Western journalists could only assume or speculate what it was negotiated during the talks in Moscow and what the Soviet leadership enforced using the power of the strongest. Today, we have access to sources from the

governments in East Berlin, Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, Bucharest and Sofia (unfortunately not to those from Moscow). The academic publications on the relationship between the “Eastern Bloc states” and the Pact’s leading power, mostly referred to in simplified terms as “Moscow”, are therefore exciting and worth reading.<sup>3</sup>

Given that the focus was understandably on “Moscow”, the bilateral contacts of the Warsaw Pact states have received much less attention in contemporary history research so far. The former Military History Research Institute in Potsdam became aware of this desideratum, and began to issue a series of publications on the bilateral relations of the East German armed forces in 2010: the first volume was dedicated to the relations with the armed forces of Poland<sup>4</sup>, followed by a publication on the cooperation with the Hungarian People’s Army in 2011<sup>5</sup>, and one on the cooperation with the armed forces of Czechoslovakia in 2016.<sup>6</sup> Until now, the military relations of East Germany with Romania and with Bulgaria also have been desiderata awaiting research. Only Rüdiger Wenzke had taken a first look at the topic in 2009. “*The relationship with Romania was at times more complicated [than with the other Warsaw Pact states] given the well-known critical attitude of its leadership towards some issues of the Warsaw Pact. Working contacts and relations in terms of the «brotherhood-in-arms» were clearly less intensive than with some other armies in the Pact. Contacts existed primarily in the field of military economy whereas restraint was applied in political and ideological matters.*”<sup>7</sup>

The objective of this study was to verify, to underpin and, if necessary, to correct this notion with the help of an extensive source base. Delving into the topic, it was discovered that the political relations between the GDR and Romania as well as their contacts in other fields like economy, culture or science have yet to become an interest of research or the media. Only Georg Herbsttritt presented an extensive study of the contacts between the secret services of the two countries in 2016.<sup>8</sup> Even in various general overviews of the foreign policy of the second German state, its relations with Romania were mentioned only briefly in the margins. Research in this field focused on relations between East Berlin and Moscow and Bonn, which is hardly surprising.<sup>9</sup> These two antagonistic items were also the contemporary benchmarks of East German foreign policy, even more: they were the benchmarks of the whole policy of the leadership in East Berlin in almost all fields.<sup>10</sup> When researchers on East German foreign policy diverted their focus from Moscow to relations within the Pact, they often looked at the “northern triangle” (Hermann Wentker) of GDR - Poland - Czechoslovakia.<sup>11</sup> The focus on the relationship between East Berlin and Moscow was in agreement with the contemporary fixation of the SED (Party of Socialist Unity in Germany) leadership: “*Without the Soviet Union, there would be no GDR*” – looking back Erich Honecker put East Berlin’s dependence on Moscow in a nutshell.<sup>12</sup> The declaration of 1987 that there was hardly a state in Eastern Europe whose leadership depended more on agreement with the Eastern leading power than the GDR continues to be true according to the current state of research.<sup>13</sup> There is no doubt that a major conflict with Moscow fought openly would have endangered the basis of the SED rule.<sup>14</sup> It was not least a fundamental self-interest that caused the leadership in East Berlin to make an effort to become the “super ally” (Hope Harrison)<sup>15</sup> of Moscow.

The leadership in Bucharest took a completely different approach. Nicolae Ceaușescu and his predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, used every opportunity to emphasise Romania’s own interests and, if possible, to assert them vis-à-vis Moscow. In the Soviet-led

alliance, they looked for room to take their own steps and select their own paths but without risking a complete break with the superpower and thus avoiding the latter’s response.<sup>16</sup>

This briefly outlined state of research gave rise to the interesting question of how the “super ally” in East Berlin who was submissively dependent on the Soviet Union and the leadership of the most recalcitrant Eastern Bloc state in Bucharest cooperated bilaterally in military matters. It is impossible to look at the military contacts outside the political system and the larger political framework. Therefore, it is also necessary to regard the military contacts between East Germany and Romania in the broader context of the political relations between the GDR and socialist Romania within the Soviet-dominated bloc. This study expressly limits itself to the bilateral military contacts of the two states and armed forces. Their cooperation within and incorporation into the structure of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation will not be included in this paper. Those are separate major topics that have already been the focus of other publications as mentioned above. A look at old maps shows the great distance between the two states. The title of this study combines the geographic distance with the question of whether the distance between the leaderships in East Berlin and Bucharest was also determined by the different political positions of the two states.

### **Romania’s special path**

The special path Romania took in foreign affairs is commonly linked to Nicolae Ceaușescu. Ceaușescu assumed the leadership of the Romanian Workers’ Party in 1965. But Romania has had aspirations for autonomy in foreign affairs before that, far before that in fact, under his predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej. Since the early 1960s, Romania demanded greater independence from the Soviet Union while generally remaining loyal to the Soviet-led alliance. The reasons for Gheorghiu-Dej’s change of direction was his concern that he might be replaced overnight by the “big brother” given that Moscow had already taken similar steps with other party leaders in the satellite states. The party headquarters in Bucharest considered the actions of the Soviet leadership an

unpredictable factor of uncertainty. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej drew his own conclusions. With the April Declaration of 1964, the Romanian Workers' Party emphasized and demonstrated its independent political and economic position. The relations between the member states of the Eastern alliance and in particular with the Pact's leading power should be based on six principles: "*Independence and national sovereignty, equal rights, mutual advantage, non-interference with the internal affairs of other states, territorial integrity and socialist internationalism*".<sup>17</sup>

According to other research findings, the adoption of the April Declaration had been triggered by the Soviet-Chinese conflict. Bucharest therefore refused to defend Beijing in the dispute between Nikita Khrushchev and Mao Zedong and took a neutral position.<sup>18</sup> The year 1964 "publicly marked" Bucharest's will to go "national special ways".<sup>19</sup>

Romania's special way within the Eastern bloc differed markedly from the governments' desire for freedom in Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968. Gheorghiu-Dej and Ceaușescu were anything but liberal reformers like Imre Nagy in Budapest and Alexander Dubček in Prague. They were Romanian nationalists or to put it more positively Romanian patriots. Domestically, they first and foremost were dictatorial hard-liners whose every thought and action was focused on retaining their power.<sup>20</sup> Gheorghiu-Dej's successor Ceaușescu consolidated his predecessor's course of isolation: he did not content himself with political declarations, and he was not afraid of "concrete acts of defiance".<sup>21</sup> In unwavering pursuit of his objective to increase his political scope of action in favour of Romania's national interest, Ceaușescu complained about the "*increasing efforts of the Soviet leadership to strengthen the economic integration within COMECON and the political and military integration within the Warsaw Pact*".<sup>22</sup>

Despite all the distance to Moscow, the Soviet-style rule of the communist Workers' Party was never questioned in Bucharest either. Ceaușescu's aim was to expand his room for political maneuver in favor of Romania's national interests.<sup>23</sup> And Romania was indeed always a member of both the Warsaw Treaty

Organization and COMECON. Bucharest did not leave the two alliances even during the days when its distance to Moscow was at its peak. Nevertheless, it did take liberties with special military rights within the Warsaw Treaty Organization that no other Eastern bloc state dared to: Ceaușescu did not allow other Eastern bloc armies to conduct live full troop exercises in his country, only command post exercises; Ceaușescu insisted on even retaining exclusive command of the Romanian armed forces in war and on not ceding it to Moscow. On the other hand, Ceaușescu emphasized to Leonid Brezhnev in 1976 that "*we Romanians will fight alongside the Soviet Union in the event of a war*". He said that Romania would stand alongside the Soviet Union "just as it had fought alongside Russia 100 years ago"<sup>24</sup>.

Western secret services were also unable to make head or tail of Romania's maneuvering and regarded it as an instability factor. According to the CIA, the US secret service, Romania was also the "least reliable ally" in Moscow's view.<sup>25</sup> Both the East and West were of the opinion that there was no relying on the country while it was under Ceaușescu's rule. In the West, Ceaușescu cultivated his image of a Moscow critic in its own camp. He enjoyed being celebrated in Washington and Paris. He enjoyed being able to welcome President Charles de Gaulle of France to Bucharest in 1968 and Richard Nixon, the President of the United States, in 1969. In addition to hoped-for economic advantages, Ceaușescu's interest was "*of a political nature since a privileged relationship with the West would guarantee wide international support for Romania and its leadership and effect a special status and increasing credibility of the country at the international arena*".<sup>26</sup> In a nutshell: Ceaușescu demanded a "special role in the East-West dialog", he wanted to participate in the "complex global balancing act" of the super powers.<sup>27</sup>

Moscow was irritated by these little games and wondered: should it intervene in Romania as it had done in Czechoslovakia in 1968? The Soviet general staff also had ready-made plans for an invasion of Romania. After the suppression of the Prague reform communism in August 1968, the Soviet plans to invade Romania as well were put on the table again.

Moscow eventually refrained from taking military measures, as it thought that the political risk was too high and the damage to its reputation would have become even greater than it already was as a consequence of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Instead, Moscow opted for a political strategy that provided for Romania's long-term integration into the Eastern alliance. This called for perseverance and patience with the recalcitrant shaky candidate in Bucharest instead of direct military intervention – it was Moscow's strategy for two decades. And here East Berlin entered the stage as the self-declared closet ally of Moscow.

### **Targeting the crucial point of the East German leadership**

The differences between East Berlin and Bucharest first became public in articles in the party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* on the April 1964 Declaration I mentioned at the beginning and Romania's independent position on general and economic policy. The GDR leadership was more annoyed with Bucharest's rapprochement with Bonn than with its independent position on economic policy. In 1963, Romania and the Federal Republic of Germany concluded a trade agreement, which also applied to West Berlin. East Berlin only heard about it afterwards – and seethed with rage. By including West Berlin in the trade agreement with West Germany, Romania had touched the crucial point of the GDR leadership's policy on Germany and its rawest nerve. This was not a one-off lapse by Bucharest, but the first sign of a new foreign policy: Romania was "intent on building bridges to the outside world"<sup>28</sup>; it should be added: even and especially across the Iron Curtain, even bridges to Bonn.

Bucharest again touched East Berlin's rawest nerve in 1967: Romania established full diplomatic relations with West Germany. Previously, Bonn's claim to sole representation of the whole of Germany had prevented the establishment of diplomatic relations with states that recognized the GDR. The only exception was Moscow, which was too important for Bonn to deprive itself of its relations with the eastern superpower because of East Berlin. And so, in 1967, there was a West German ambassador in Bucharest and a Romanian embassy

on the Rhine. East Berlin again seethed with rage. The party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* accused Romania in early February 1967 of jeopardizing peace and security in Europe.<sup>29</sup> The Romanian party newspaper *Scinteia* shot back and accused the leadership in East Berlin of "completely disregarding the principles of Marxism-Leninism on the relations between individual socialist states".<sup>30</sup> *Scinteia* wrote that Romania had accepted the historical fact that there were two German states, so it necessarily had to cultivate normal relations with both German states. It claimed that in doing so, Romania was contributing to détente in Europe.<sup>31</sup>

The alienation between the two party leaderships continued into the 1970s. In 1971, the GDR Ministry for State Security analysed Romania's policy: it noted that the leadership in Bucharest had further departed from the "basic positions of the sister countries", especially in foreign policy issues. It found that Romania was orienting itself towards the "anti-Soviet objectives" of the Chinese leadership.<sup>32</sup> It concluded that the 17-point plan passed by the Executive Committee of the Romanian Communist Party in 1971 was the basis for Ceaușescu's policy, his foreign policy being nationalist and his domestic policy repressive and neo-Stalinist.

Then, in 1972, a ray of hope appeared in the relations between the two states: new in office, Erich Honecker travelled to Bucharest and joined Ceaușescu in signing the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the GDR and Romania. However, this treaty, too, was only a ray of hope at a first glance and on closer scrutiny turned out to be a sign of the bad relations between the two states. It was the last treaty the GDR concluded with its so-called sister countries. Romania was the unloved distant sister. The treaty had been ready to be signed as early as in 1970, and Ceaușescu had invited Walter Ulbricht to Bucharest to sign it that year. Ulbricht himself did not fly, and it was another two years before his successor flew to the city. Did Romania's adoption of a special path have a negative impact on the military relations in the 1970s?

### Cooperation in armament in the centre of military relations

The files of the GDR Ministry of National Defence show that the contact between the two armed forces was never broken off. The contact between the military leaderships even continued in times of political tension. Well, that is no surprise; after all, both armies were in an alliance. There were de facto no points of contact in strategic and operational planning for a war either, simply due to geography and the great physical distance between the two armies. Romania – always anxious for autonomy – cooperated with the Soviet Union, with Bulgaria and, out of necessity, also with Hungary. The Soviet armed forces stationed in East Germany were the great anchor of the GDR armed forces. There were also operational contacts with the neighbouring armies in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Senior staffs or the operational-level general staffs of East Germany and Romania basically only came into contact with each other during exercises and manoeuvres conducted on the level of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.<sup>33</sup>

Sources report that the first contacts between the two armed forces were established in holidaymaker exchange programs in the late 1950s. In 1959, 38 Romanians (officers and their families) spent their holidays in Prora on the Baltic Sea coast, while 34 East Germans holidayed in Mamaia on the Black Sea coast.<sup>34</sup> The military contacts between East Germany and Romania did not focus on the holidaymaker exchange programs, but on cooperation in armament and the development of new military technology. A source dating from 1972 provides an example (see Annex 1).

Romania's defence minister (the official title was Minister for the Armed Forces) wrote to his East German counterpart. The letter concerned future cooperation and coordination between the Warsaw Treaty Organization armed forces in creating an automated land force command and control system. Automation of armed forces command and control was a very important topic in the 1970s, both in East and West. In this case, the defence minister of Romania agreed in principle with the planned future cooperation and coordination between the armed forces of the Warsaw

Treaty Organization, but was of the view that a concept should be developed first.<sup>35</sup>

Defence cooperation did not begin in 1972, but as early as in 1958, with a framework agreement for the subsequent five years and a specific agreement for the following year. In 1959, Romania delivered the GDR military technology valued at 4 million transfer rubles, while the GDR delivered Romania military technology worth 68,000 transfer rubles.<sup>36</sup> The glaring disparity in the deliveries was not a singular event for that year. Sources indicate that there was also a constant disparity in the dealings in the subsequent years: the value of deliveries from Romania to the GDR armed forces during the overall period from 1960 to 1965 amounted to 55 million transfer rubles. While the GDR delivered Romania military technology worth only 1.2 million transfer rubles. Romania's industry delivered shoulder-fired antitank weapons, antiaircraft machine guns as well as practice and dummy grenades. The GDR delivered the Romanian armed forces binoculars, periscopes and radio sets.<sup>37</sup>

*Value of the contractually agreed deliveries of military equipment and military technology between the GDR and Romania in millions of transfer rubles*

Period	Romania -> GDR	GDR -> Romania
From 1960 to 1965 <sup>38</sup>	55	1.2
From 1976 to 1980 <sup>39</sup>	33	5.2
From 1981 to 1985 <sup>40</sup>	160	13.6
From 1986 to 1990 <sup>41</sup>	190	29

At a first glance, it is clear: the value of the deliveries continuously increased over the years. At the same time, however, the disparity in the deliveries continued: the bilateral agreement for 1976 to 1980 provided for Romanian deliveries amounting to 33 million rubles, while the GDR was to supply Romania military technology worth 5.2 million rubles. In the new agreements, the term "military equipment" was replaced with the typical GDR term "special equipment"<sup>42</sup>. Romania's industry delivered goods such as machine guns and associated ammunition, practice and dummy

grenades. The GDR produced teleprinters, telegraph equipment, microfilming systems and bridge-laying vehicles for the Romanian armed forces.<sup>43</sup> The unevenness in the trade balance remained until into the 1980s. But all in all the numbers rose substantially. The bilateral agreement for 1981 to 1985 provided for Romanian deliveries worth 160 million rubles, while the GDR was to supply Romania military technology worth 13.6 million rubles. The list of equipment from Romania contained machine guns, pistols, 120 mm grenade launchers and 14.5 mm anti-tank machine guns, together with all the associated ammunition. The deliveries from the GDR included bridge-laying equipment and range finders. The GDR also offered repair services for engines.<sup>44</sup> The bilateral agreement for 1986 to 1990 provided for Romanian deliveries worth 190 million rubles, while the GDR was to supply Romania military technology worth 29 million rubles. The list of equipment from Romania contained BTR-70 armoured infantry fighting vehicles, together with engines and spare parts, grenade launchers, flame guns, machine guns and 14.5 mm anti-tank machine guns, together with all the associated ammunition. Deliveries from the GDR consisted of bridge-laying equipment and spare parts for unspecified electronic devices and power generators. The GDR also offered repair services for MiG-23 combat aircraft and ship engines.<sup>45</sup>

It can roughly be said that the annual agreements over thirty years always featured a similar range of deliveries. Romania's industry delivered infantry arms and ammunition, and occasionally armoured infantry fighting vehicles. The GDR supplied Romania electronic devices and radio technology and offered repair services for aircraft and all kind of engines. All in all, Romania delivered far more than the GDR did in return. So the GDR had to pay extra, and Romania thus earned a high net profit each year with the armament deals. Romania's budget was in good need of this because the country's economy was feeble and ailing.

Besides defence equipment deliveries, military contacts focused on mutual visits. The Romanian Minister of the Armed Forces visited the GDR in 1970, a return visit to Bucharest was paid by Army General Hoffmann in 1972.

Hoffmann again paid an official visit to Bucharest in 1976. According to GDR files, the return visit by the Romanian minister planned for 1978 was cancelled at short notice by the Romanian side. The GDR reissued the invitation in 1980, and Bucharest indicated that it would be accepted this time. The Romanian Minister of Defence finally visited the GDR again in May 1981.<sup>46</sup>

Official visits by the ministers of defence were always a political issue as well. The visits show that apart from big politics' tensions between Bucharest and Moscow top-level military relations between Bucharest and East Berlin were not even broken off during the 1970s, and the military relations between the two states in general were never bad.

### **Intensification of military contacts in the context of improved political relations**

Even the previously reserved political relations between the two state and party leaders improved in the 1980s. This was probably also helped by the fact that Honecker and Ceaușescu somehow liked each other appreciably. Their personal touch for each other increased as they grew older (see Annex 2).

Nicolae Ceaușescu visited East Berlin four times in the 1980s: in 1984, 1985, 1988, and, for the last time, in October 1989. Honecker also visited Bucharest four times: in 1972, 1980, 1984 and 1987. In 1984, he attended the ceremonies for the Romanian national holiday as an official guest of state, remarkably as the only head of state and party leader from the Eastern bloc. Looking back, the former GDR ambassador to Bucharest, Siegfried Bock, saw a real "old boys' friendship" in the relationship between Honecker and Ceaușescu.<sup>47</sup>

To explain politics primarily with like or dislike and personal friendships between statesmen probably always falls somewhat short. According to the words attributed both to Charles de Gaulle and, prior to him, to the British Prime Minister Henry John Temple Viscount Palmerston, states don't have friends, only interests. In the particular case of Romania, interest in intensifying bilateral relations with the GDR was part of Ceaușescu's rapprochement with Moscow. Since late 1984, Ceaușescu had gradually given up his idea of

pursuing a special path in foreign policy and realigned himself more or less dutifully with the loyalty of the Eastern bloc to its alliance. The main reason for this turnaround, however, was Romania's increasingly difficult economic situation. Moscow was successful in its efforts to tackle Romania's painful economic problems. In the mid-1980s, Romania was again aligned with the Eastern bloc – under the leadership of Moscow. What impact did the end of Romania's pursuit of a special path have on the military relations? It caused them to intensify noticeably. This was expressed in mutual high level visits (see Annex 3).

In 1981, the Chief of the Main Staff of the People's Army, Colonel General Streletz, received an invitation to Romania. His Romanian counterpart, Colonel General Vasile Milea, wrote that he was "*certain [...] that the friendly dialog will help us to get better acquainted with each other and to understand each other better.*"<sup>48</sup> The international relations division at the GDR Ministry of Defence advised the Chief of the Main Staff not to accept the invitation to Bucharest, at least not at this early time. It was of the view that the visit to the GDR by the Romanian Minister of Defence planned for May 1981 should take place first. And it was also of the view that the first official international trip of Colonel General Streletz as Chief of the Main Staff should not necessarily be to Romania, but preferably to the Soviet Union or Poland.<sup>49</sup> (Fritz Streletz had been Deputy of the Minister for National Defence and Chief of the Main Staff since January 1979 and had apparently not led any official delegations abroad until early 1981).

The Romanian Minister of Defence, Major General Olteanu, visited the GDR in June 1981. According to feedback from the GDR military attaché in Bucharest, Olteanu had highly appreciated his visit. He was reported to have said that the talks had been "very useful, frank and clear."<sup>50</sup> The international relations division at the GDR Ministry of Defence rated the visit as "smooth and without incidents." "After being initially reserved", the minister and his delegation had become "more outgoing."<sup>51</sup> According to meeting notes, the Romanian minister had emphasized that his country was a member of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and would always fulfil its obligations reliably. He had said

that the Romanian People's Army was ready to defend the socialist achievements against any enemy and that in accordance with the strategic mission, the military interaction primarily took place with the Soviet Army and the Bulgarian and Hungarian People's Armies.<sup>52</sup>

Army General Hoffmann paid a return visit to Bucharest in May 1982, staying for a full week.<sup>53</sup> In spite of all diplomatic courtesies and the usual socialist stereotypical expressions, the political differences were brought to light in his talk with Nicolae Ceaușescu. When the East German minister did not want to let Ceaușescu's "*statements on the general global political situation go unchallenged, the latter simply ignored Hoffmann's objections and remarks, a report stated.*"<sup>54</sup>

The GDR Ministry of Defence documents also indicate that the scepticism about Romania's foreign policy had not disappeared completely. Ceaușescu took great pains to show again that his position deviated from Moscow's when he found a suitable opportunity to do so. Such an opportunity presented itself in 1983 when the re-armament crisis arose in Europe. In an address on Romanian TV on 16 February 1983, Ceaușescu declared that the arms build-up on both sides threatened peace in Europe. He said that no American missiles should be permitted to be deployed in Western Europe. But added that the Soviet intermediate-range missiles also had to be withdrawn and destroyed. According to the assessment of the GDR military attaché in Bucharest, Ceaușescu had thus "*significantly deviated from the positions of the Warsaw Treaty Organization*". He reckoned that the special position of the SRR [Romania] on disarmament issues had obtained a further characteristic.<sup>55</sup>

The Chief of the Romanian Border Troops, Vasile Petruț, paid a working visit to the GDR in 1982. His East German counterpart, Lieutenant General Klaus-Dieter Baumgarten, flew to Romania in 1983. The (new) Chief of the Romanian Border Troops, Constantin Călinoiu, in turn flew to the GDR on a working visit in 1986. Without doubt, the GDR had great expertise in the field of border security. The Romanians were interested in the lessons the East Germans had learned, as they had to secure a border with Yugoslavia.

But the border troops did not become the priority matter for the military contacts. The priority was and remained on the technical cooperation in the fields of armament and the development of new technology. In 1983, the Director of the Military-Technical Institute of the GDR Armed Forces, Major General Müller, travelled to Bucharest to meet the Chief of Technology and Armament of the Romanian Armed Forces, Colonel General Victor-Atanasie Stănculescu. According to internal reports of East German military delegation, which as usual also found their way to the secret service, the talks were not only about armament and military technology. In fact, the Romanian general surprised his German guest by delivering a very candid and critical description of Romania's disastrous economic situation: "*Stănculescu described the energy situation and the supply of the population as catastrophic. In addition to the energy problem, the economy is burdened by an export requirement for food, with which the SSR has to repay loans. Currently every car owner in Romania receives 20 litres of gas a month. From this situation no way out is to be seen. Something would be decided every day, but none of it would be realized. [...] Disappointed, Stănculescu described the current developments in the SSR [Romania] as very bitter.*"<sup>56</sup> Regarding the actual topic of the interview with the East German General, Colonel General Stănculescu expressed his interest in close cooperation in the "perspective development of weapons." "*He justified this by saying that we agree and agree with us – even with common weapons developments – against imperialism.*"<sup>57</sup> (see Annex 4).

The fact that Lieutenant General Stănculescu dared to express these frank words of criticism regarding Ceaușescu's policy as early as in 1983 was also due to his speaking German quite well and therefore his being able to dispense with the services of an interpreter. These frank words of criticism regarding Ceaușescu's policy were voiced in a one-to-one, but found their way into the files of the East German secret service.<sup>58</sup>

#### **A closer look into the work of the Romanian military attaché in East Berlin**

In addition to the mutual visits, military contacts were above all maintained through

the two military attachés. The Romanian military attaché in East Berlin was accredited in 1974 and remained there until June 1990. The internal memos of the GDR Ministry of Defence international cooperation division in the 1980s repeatedly indicate that colonel Burbulea announced his imminent return to the home country. It did not take long for his personal problems and his wished-for return to his home country to become the most important topic of the talks – at least for him. But colonel Burbulea had to remain at his post in the embassy in East Berlin – for 16 years. The internal memos reveal his distinct personal frustration. (A new, younger military attaché arrived in Berlin in May 1990. From then on, the old and the new military attachés kept appointments together.)

After the end of the Ceaușescu regime, the Romanian colonel at his post in East Berlin openly complained that the times were tough under the old regime. According to colonel Burbulea, Romania had only had military attachés in Sofia, Belgrade and Paris in 1989. (It is remarkable, but Moscow was not mentioned. In another conversation, there was mention of five military attachés (this could have included the one in Moscow). Colonel Burbulea blamed the wife of the dictator, Elena, to have been responsible for the radical reduction in the number of military attaché posts<sup>59</sup> (see Annex 5).

In addition to the usual diplomatic phrases in the global military attaché business, the Romanian military attaché was interested in the organization of the GDR's military recreation system. A letter from 1985 included the following questions: "*To whom are the recreation homes subordinated? How often can military personnel use such recreation homes in a year? Who bears the costs for accommodation and how high are they?*"<sup>60</sup>

In the late summer and fall 1989, the aging attaché had to work rather hard once more. Obviously acting on instructions from Bucharest, he travelled to various People's Army's barracks and gave presentations about Romania and its armed forces (see Annex 6).

The first presentation took place at the GDR Ministry of Defence political division in Strausberg in August 1989. The internal memo of the Administration for International

Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defence provides a stark impression of the course of the event: to increase the effect of the presentation, Bucharest had provided a new film: “For national independence, peace and freedom” – a work of propaganda. The ministerial comment reads: “*The colour film was completely new (1989), up-to-date, informative. [...] The personage of N. Ceaușescu and his spouse continued to be at the centre of the film.*”<sup>61</sup>

After his presentation at the GDR Ministry of Defence political division, the military attaché obviously firmly refused to accept any questions from the audience: He had “no mandate to do so” and “the film and its presentation answered all questions”. Major General Kusch, the host, said a few warm words. He said that his superior, Colonel General Brünner, has been in Romania in 1988 and has spoken about “pleasant impressions”: according to Major General Kusch, the chief of the East German MoD’s political division remarked that Romania was “*not a poor country because of the many cars*” and *praised Romania as “one of the few real banks of socialism.”*<sup>62</sup> By this Colonel General Brünner obviously meant that Romania under Ceaușescu continued to be reliable, unlike Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union.

The Romanian colonel had apparently little interest in big politics or ideology. He was more concerned with his personal problems. Even in front of the officers of the GDR Ministry of Defence, he could not stop himself from mentioning his hopefully imminent return to his home country and his retirement. The memo included a reference to the colonel’s words about the “paradisiacal location of his home” and the one-hectare garden. This induced Major General Kusch to comment and ask whether he might be allowed to put up his tent in the military attaché’s home’s garden.”<sup>63</sup> Whether this was an honest question or a fairly sarcastic one remains open to conjecture. In the subsequent weeks, the Romanian colonel spoke at the Military-Political College in Berlin-Grünau, at the base of the 6th Flotilla in Dranske/Rügen, in the House of the Army in Erfurt and at the training centre in Delitzsch – always accompanied by a colourful propaganda film and without giving permission for questions to be asked.<sup>64</sup> (By the way, the

sources do not tell us whether the Romanian colonel also went on to praise his paradise-like home and garden.)

### **A late flourish towards the end of the 1980s – and the end**

As Honecker and Ceaușescu distanced themselves further from the policy of Gorbachev, the “old boys’ friendship”<sup>65</sup> between them became closer. Honecker granted Ceaușescu’s 70th birthday in 1988 to the Karl-Marx Order and thus acknowledged his opposition to Soviet perestroika.<sup>66</sup> Honecker last travelled to Bucharest in July 1989, to attend the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact member states. The meeting of the Eastern bloc leaders in Bucharest was the last in the familiar line-up. The writing was on the wall in the conference hall. Honecker and Ceaușescu were by no means blind and could see it clearly. And they wanted to prevent the demise of their rule. The “old boys’ friendship” in the end also turned into political closeness. Honecker and Ceaușescu agreed on the rejection of the policy of change initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev. They criticized him more and more openly and outspokenly. In 1989, Ceaușescu went into open confrontation against the reformist government in Warsaw. He appealed to the other party leaders to prevent Poland from “getting into the hands of reactionary circles”. Even Honecker thought that this was going too far. Ceaușescu stood alone against the Polish leadership. Historian Hermann Wentker stated: “*Irrespective of all sympathies for the anti-reform course of the Romanian dictator, the GDR leadership saw that the proposed alliance against Poland had no prospect of success.*”<sup>67</sup> Benno-Eide Siebs came to a similar conclusion about the dilemma behind Honecker’s closeness to Ceaușescu: “*Only Romania, which was equally uncompromising, held similar positions. However, it was not an ally of international renown, but rather an additional burden, which is why the two states did not adopt a joint approach.*”<sup>68</sup> Historian Anneli Ute Gabanyi saw a “special alliance of dogmatists” within the Eastern bloc in which she also included the Czech Milos Jakes in addition to Honecker and Ceaușescu.<sup>69</sup> In the late 1980s, Ceaușescu once again made his

country an outsider in the Eastern bloc. But this time, it was not to the pleasure of the West as it had been twenty years before, but to the horror of the world. The bloody end of his regime (which also meant his own bloody end) marked the end of this tragic development.

The “informal alliance of the political hardliners”<sup>70</sup> in East Berlin and Bucharest also had an impact on the military relations. They reached their culmination in 1988 if the visit to the GDR by the Romanian Minister of Defence can be called that. In May 1988, Colonel General Vasile Milea travelled to East Germany accompanied by a man by the name of Ceaușescu, but the man was not the head of state and party leader; it was his brother Ilie, who as a lieutenant general held the post of deputy minister of defence.<sup>71</sup> The obligatory return visit was not paid by the GDR Minister of Defence, but by the Chief of the Political Main Administration, Colonel General Horst Brünner. He travelled to Bucharest in July 1989 and the delegation was also received by head of state and party leader Ceaușescu. The party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* reported on the visit<sup>72</sup> (see Annex 7).

According to sources, the last visit to the GDR by Romanian military figures took place on 2 November 1989. The Chief of Air Defence, Colonel General Mocanu, held talks with the Chief of the GDR Air Forces/Air Defence. The peaceful revolution in the GDR was already well underway. Honecker had no longer held his office for two weeks, and the Wall and the intra-German border came down a week later. The revolution in Romania was long in coming, with the Ceaușescu regime holding on to power for another seven weeks.

Ceaușescu, his wife and a few remaining loyal supporters fled from Bucharest on 22 December 1989. Ceaușescu and his wife were executed on 25 December of that year, after short work had been made of them. So far, so familiar. On 28 December, the Chief of the Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defence visited the Romanian embassy and declared his “solidarity” with and “high esteem for the Romanian armed forces.”<sup>73</sup> It is well known that the armed forces had changed sides during the popular uprising, facilitating the fall of the dictator – and quickly

executed him. The memos of the East German military figures describe a military attaché who was “mentally and physically drained” and appeared to be very agitated: “*The situation is being controlled by the army, life is returning to normal. But there are still hostile foreign detachments, saboteurs and terrorists repeatedly provoking armed clashes. The army will destroy these groups with military force, but wants to prevent bloodshed among civilians.*”<sup>74</sup>

The chimera of hostile foreign detachments, saboteurs and terrorists who allegedly operated in Romania was a narrative used by the armed forces and people who had previously been loyal to the regime, but had become turncoats in order to emphasize their indispensability and strengthen their positions in those revolutionary days. Two days later, officers of the Administration for International Relations again went to the embassy to inform themselves about the situation in Romania. The sources list further talks on 30 January 1990, 27 February, 13 March, 9 April, 3 May, 15 May, 21 May and 29 May 1990. There was a lot to talk about or rather a lot of new things to be informed about. In 1990, hardly a stone was left unturned in either country and their armed forces. According to the military attaché, 20 Romanian generals had been discharged from the Romanian armed forces by March 1990, but no successors had yet been appointed. President Iliescu was said to wield little authority.<sup>75</sup>

In April and May 1990, the Romanian side made great efforts to get the new Minister for Disarmament and Defence, Rainer Eppelmann, to visit Romania.<sup>76</sup> There is no information about such a visit. It most probably did not take place. Minister Eppelmann had enough on his hands as it was during his short term of office, and a visit to Bucharest was certainly not at the top of his long to do list.

### **Allies at a distance – geographically as well as politically**

Summing up, it can be said that the GDR and Romania were nominally allies within the Eastern bloc for four decades, but remained allies at a distance. The distance was not only due to the geographical distance between the two

countries, but also to the political distance between their governments. Romania decidedly went its own way under Nicolae Ceaușescu, having already done so under his predecessor. The pursuit of its special path made Romania an uncertain and unpredictable factor in the 1960s and 1970s, unpredictable for both the East and West.

Regardless of the political uncertainties, the contacts between the East German and Romanian armed forces never broke off, even in difficult times. The military cooperation between the submissively dependent “super ally” of the Soviets and the most recalcitrant Eastern Bloc state continued also in the late 1960s and 1970s. Remarkably frequent mutual visits of the ministers of defence are proof of that. In the 1980s, Ceaușescu re-approached the Soviet Union and increasingly subjected himself to the alliance discipline. The cooperation between the Romanian and the East German armed forces boomed noticeably, this was expressed in the increasing financial value of mutual arms deliveries and further increasing mutual visits of officers at working level. Encouraged by an “old boys’ friendship” between Honecker and Ceaușescu, who agreed on their rejection of Gorbachev, the relations between East Germany and Romania underwent a real renaissance in the late 1980s. The military relations also intensified and enjoyed a late flourish towards the end of the 1980s. These relations were therefore also a reflection of the political big picture.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> “Ostblock: Risse im Monolith”. In: *Der Spiegel*, 1 April 1964, 83-84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>3</sup> For instance Jordan Baev, “*Bulgarisch-sowjetische militärische Zusammenarbeit*”. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt. Von der Gründung bis zum Zusammenbruch 1955 bis 1991*. On behalf of MGFA edited by Torsten Diedrich, Winfried Heinemann and Christian F. Ostermann, Berlin 2009 (=Militärgeschichte der DDR, 16), 43-58; Andrzej Paczkowski, “*Die Polnische Volksarmee im Warschauer Pakt*”. In: *Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 119-132; Wanda Jarzabek, “*Die Volksrepublik Polen in den politischen Strukturen des Warschauer Vertrags zu Zeiten der Entspannung und der “Ostpolitik”*” In:

*Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 133-148; Imre Okvath, “*Die Integration der Ungarischen Volksarmee in den Warschauer Pakt*”. In: *Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 175-184; Petre Opris, “*Die rumänische Armee und die gemeinsamen Manöver des Warschauer Paktes*”. In: *Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 185-208; Carmen Rijnoveanu, “*Rumänien und die Militärreform des Warschauer Paktes 1960 bis 1970*”. In: *Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 209-224; Carmen Rijnoveanu, “*Die Konferenz über Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa – eine Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik?*” In: *Geschichte ohne Grenzen? Europäische Dimensionen der Militärgeschichte vom 19. Jahrhundert bis heute*. On behalf of ZMSBW edited by Jörg Echternkamp and Hans-Hubertus Mack, Berlin 2017, 79-88.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Streitkräfte der DDR und Polens in der Operationsplanung des Warschauer Paktes*. On behalf of MGFA edited by Rüdiger Wenzke, Potsdam 2010 (=Potsdamer Schriften zur Militärgeschichte, 12).

<sup>5</sup> *Die NVA und die Ungarische Volksarmee im Warschauer Pakt*. On behalf of MGFA edited by Laszlo Veszpremy and Rüdiger Wenzke, Potsdam 2011 (=Potsdamer Schriften zur Militärgeschichte, 15).

<sup>6</sup> *Zwischen Bündnistreue und staatlichen Eigeninteressen. Die Streitkräfte der DDR und der CSSR 1968 bis 1990*. On behalf of MGFA edited by Oliver Bange, Potsdam 2016 (=Potsdamer Schriften zur Militärgeschichte, 26).

<sup>7</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, “*«Sozialistische Waffenbrüder»? Über die Beziehungen der Nationalen Volksarmee der DDR zu anderen Warschauer-Pakt-Armeen*”. In: *Warschauer Pakt* (cf. note 3), 85-118.

<sup>8</sup> Georg Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde. Rumänien, die Securitate und die DDR-Staatssicherheit 1950 bis 1989*, Göttingen, 2016, 134.

<sup>9</sup> For example Ingrid Muth, *Die DDR-Außenpolitik 1949-1972. Inhalte, Strukturen, Mechanismen*, Berlin 2000 (=Forschungen zur DDR-Gesellschaft); Hermann Wentker, *Außenpolitik in engen Grenzen. Die DDR im internationalen System 1949-1989*, Munich 2007; *Drei Jahrzehnte Außenpolitik der DDR*. Ed. by Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Gert Leptin, Ulrich Scheuner and Eberhard Schulz, Munich, Vienna 1979; Benno-Eide Siebs, *Die Außenpolitik der DDR 1976-1989. Strategien und Grenzen*, Paderborn 1999; Joachim Scholtysek, *Die Außenpolitik der DDR*, Munich 2003 (=Enzyklopädie Deutscher Geschichte, 69).

<sup>10</sup> On the designation of Moscow and Bonn as “fixed stars” of the GDR foreign policy already in 2004 Oliver Bange, “*Die Außenpolitik der DDR. Plädoyer für ein vernachlässigtes Forschungsfeld*”. In: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 44, 2004, 492-500, here 499.

<sup>11</sup> Wentker, *Außenpolitik in engen Grenzen*.

<sup>12</sup> Erich Honecker, *Moabiter Notizen*, Berlin 1994, 55f. Honecker quotes CPSU Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev who had explained to him in Moscow on 28 July 1970 that “the GDR cannot exist without us, without the Soviet Union, its power and its strength. [...] The existence of the GDR corresponds with our interests, the interests of all socialist states.”

<sup>13</sup> In 1994 Ludolf Herbst analyses “the dependence or interdependence” between the two states and points out that the DDR would have been “more functionally dispensable for the interests of the Soviet Union than the Federal Republic would have been for those of the United States”. From the perspective of the Soviet Union, the establishment and perseverance of the GDR state had had “something voluntaristic.” Ludolf Herbst, “Abhängigkeit oder Interdependenz (Kommentar)” In: *Die DDR als Geschichte. Fragen – Hypothesen – Perspektiven*. Edited by Jürgen Kocka and Martin Sabrow, Berlin 1994, (=Zeithistorische Studien, 2), 186-194, here 188.

In 2004, Oliver Bange gets to the heart of the matter when he explains “the special conditionality of the GDR’s foreign policy as part of a divided nation and in economic, political and military dependence on the hegemonic power of the Warsaw Pact”. According to Bange, this “conditionality” made the historical judgement and the research approach as well as its effort “necessarily” more complicated. Bange, *Außenpolitik der DDR*, 499.

<sup>14</sup> Hans-Joachim Spanger and Lothar Brock, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in der Dritten Welt. Die Entwicklungspolitik der DDR – eine Herausforderung für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Opladen, 1987, 183. So also already in 1976 Hans Siegfried Lamm and Siegfried Kupper, *DDR und Dritte Welt*, Munich, Vienna 1976 (=Internationale Politik und Wirtschaft, 39), 41f.

<sup>15</sup> Hope Harisson, *Driving the Soviets up the wall*, Princeton/USA 2005, 143.

<sup>16</sup> On this in great detail Opris, *Die rumänische Armee und die gemeinsamen Manöver des Warschauer Paktes* (note 3), Rijnoveanu, *Rumänien und die Militärreform des Warschauer Paktes* (note 3); Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (note 3).

<sup>17</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 80.

<sup>18</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde* (cf. note 8), S. 134.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* And contemporary as mentioned at the beginning *Der Spiegel*, 1 April 1964, (cf. note 1), 83-84.

<sup>20</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 80.

<sup>21</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 82.

<sup>22</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 82.

<sup>23</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 139.

<sup>24</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 142.

<sup>25</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 142.

<sup>26</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 82.

<sup>27</sup> Rijnoveanu, *Bühne der rumänischen Sicherheitspolitik* (cf. note 3), 82.

<sup>28</sup> Royen, Christoph, “Osteuropäische Staaten”. In: *Drei Jahrzehnte Außenpolitik der DDR*, edited by Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, Gert Leptin, Ulrich Scheuner and Eberhard Schulz, 599-619, here 615.

<sup>29</sup> “Europäische Sicherheit erfordert Verzicht auf Revanchepolitik”. In: *Neues Deutschland*, 3 February 1967, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Royen, Christoph, *Osteuropäische Staaten*, 615.

<sup>31</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 154.

<sup>32</sup> BStU, MfS, ZAIG, 5483: MfS, ZAIG, 16 December 1971: Auskunft über einige Aspekte der Innen- und Außenpolitik der Führung der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei (Information about some aspects of domestic and foreign policy of the leadership of the Romanian Communist Party, cited after Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 163.

<sup>33</sup> Here in detail the studie of Christoph Nübel in this volume.

<sup>34</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/6353, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/26962, 46-48: Minister für Streitkräfte Rumäniens an Verteidigungsminister der DDR (Minister for the Armed Forces of Romania to the GDR Minister of National Defense), 13 June 1972.

<sup>36</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 53029: Abkommen zwischen den Regierungen Rumäniens und der DDR über gegenseitige Lieferung von Rüstungsgütern 1959 bis 1965 (Agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Military Equipment from 1959 to 1965), 18 July 1958.

<sup>37</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv, DVW 1/53030 and 53031: Abkommen zwischen den Regierungen Rumäniens und der DDR über gegenseitige Lieferung von Rüstungsgütern 1959 bis 1965 (Agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Military Equipment from 1959 to 1965), 18 July 1958.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> The agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of

Special Equipment from 1976 to 1980, 21 December 1975, BArch, DVW 1/53038.

<sup>40</sup> The agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Special Equipment from 1981 to 1985, 26 November 1981, BArch, DVW 1/53047.

<sup>41</sup> The agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Special Equipment from 1986 to 1990, 7 November 1985, BArch, DVW 1/53052.

<sup>42</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 53038: Abkommen zwischen den Regierungen Rumäniens und der DDR über gegenseitige Lieferung von spezieller Ausrüstung 1976 bis 1980 (Agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Special Equipment from 1976 to 1980), 21 November 1975.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 53047: Abkommen zwischen den Regierungen Rumäniens und der DDR über gegenseitige Lieferung von spezieller Ausrüstung 1981 bis 1985 (Agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Special Equipment from 1981 to 1985), 26 November 1981.

<sup>45</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 53052: Abkommen zwischen den Regierungen Rumäniens und der DDR über gegenseitige Lieferung von spezieller Ausrüstung 1986 bis 1990 (Agreement between the Governments of Romania and the GDR on Mutual Deliveries of Special Equipment from 1986 to 1990), 7 November 1985.

<sup>46</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: Aktennotiz für den Stellvertreter des Verteidigungsminister Rumäniens und Chef des Hauptstabs, (Memo for the Deputy Minister of Defense of Romania and Chief of the Main Staff), 26 March 1981.

<sup>47</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 244.

<sup>48</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: Erster Stellvertreter des Verteidigungsminister Rumäniens und Chef des Generalstabs an stellvertretenden Verteidigungsminister der DDR und Chef des Hauptstabs der NVA, (First Deputy of the Minister of Defense of Romania and Chief of the General Staff to the Deputy Minister of Defense of the GDR and Chief of the Main Staff of the NVA), 26 February 1981.

<sup>49</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no

page: Aktennotiz für den Stellvertreter des Verteidigungsminister Rumäniens und Chef des Hauptstabs, (Memo for the Deputy Minister of Defense of Romania and Chief of the Main Staff), 26 March 1981.

<sup>50</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: MfNV, Chef Verwaltung Aufklärung (MoD, Chief of the Administration for Intelligence), 12 June 1981.

<sup>51</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: MfNV, Chef Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen (MoD, Chief of Administration for International Relations), 9 June 1981.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: MfNV, Programm für den Besuch einer Militärdelegation in Rumänien 25.5 bis 29.5.1982 (MoD, Program for the visit of a military delegation to Romania, 25 to 29 May 1985).

<sup>54</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), AZN 32644: Bericht von Armeegeneral Hoffmann über den Aufenthalt einer offiziellen Militärdelegation der NVA in Rumänien (Report by Army General Hoffmann about the stay of an official NVA military delegation in Romania), May 1982, cited after Wenzke, *Sozialistische Waffenbrüder?* (cf. note 7), 106.

<sup>55</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: MfNV, Chef Verwaltung Aufklärung (MoD, Chief of the Administration for Intelligence), 18 February 1983.

<sup>56</sup> BStU, MfS, ZAIG, 14072: MfS, HA I, 5 January 1984: Informationen zur Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien (Information on the Socialist Republic of Romania), shown as attached document. This source had been mentioned for the first time in: Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 249.

<sup>57</sup> BStU, MfS, ZAIG, 14072: MfS, HA I, 5 January 1984.

<sup>58</sup> BStU, MfS, ZAIG, 14072: MfS, HA I, 5 January 1984: Informationen zur Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien (Information on the Socialist Republic of Romania), shown as attached document. This source had been mentioned for the first time in: Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 249.

<sup>59</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/42411, 37-40. Aktennotizen Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen des Verteidigungsministeriums der DDR (Memos of the Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defense), 10 April 1990 and 16 May 1990.

<sup>60</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/42411, 99. Militärattaché Rumäniens an Chef Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen des Verteidigungsministeriums der DDR (Military attaché of Romania to the Chief of the Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defense), 14 February 1985.

<sup>61</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/42411, 132f. Aktennotiz Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen des Verteidigungsministeriums der DDR (Memo, Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defense), 17 August 1989.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. 131-137.

<sup>65</sup> cf. Note 47.

<sup>66</sup> Kunze, Thomas, *Nicolae Ceaușescu*, Berlin, 2009, 352

<sup>67</sup> Wentker, Hermann, *Außenpolitik in engen Grenzen. Die DDR im internationalen System 1949-1989*, Munich 2007, 529f.

<sup>68</sup> Siebs, Benno-Eide, *Die Außenpolitik der DDR 1976-1998. Strategien und Grenzen*, Paderborn, 1999, 352.

<sup>69</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 245.

<sup>70</sup> Herbsttritt, *Entzweite Freunde*, 247.

<sup>71</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 167135, no page: Schreiben des DDR-Verteidigungsministers an den rumänischen Verteidigungsminister (Letter of the GDR Minister of Defense to the Romanian Minister of Defense), 15 January 1988 and Antwortschreiben (Reply), received on 23 April 1988.

<sup>72</sup> Nicolae Ceaușescu received GDR military figures in Bucharest, *Neues Deutschland*, 21 July 1989, 5.

<sup>73</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/42411, Bl. 43f. Aktennotizen Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen des Verteidigungsministeriums der DDR (Memos of the Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defense), 29 December 1989.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/42411, Bl. 43f. Aktennotiz Verwaltung Internationale Verbindungen des Verteidigungsministeriums der DDR (Memo of the Administration for International Relations of the GDR Ministry of Defense), 14 March 1990. Subsequent discussions indicate sources for January 30, 1990, February 27, March 13, April 9, May 3, May 15, May 21, and May 29, 1990.

<sup>76</sup> Bundesarchiv, Abt Militärarchiv (Federal Archive, Military Division), DVW 1/ 42411.

ANNEX 1

REPUBLICA SOCIALISTĂ ROMÂNIA



MINISTERUL FORȚELOR ARMATE  
MINISTRUL

Nr. M.A. 00372 din 13.06.72

08. AUG. 1972  
Stellv. Operativ

25. JULI 1972 603

46

STRICT SECRET

Exemplar nr. 1/4

StA  
3432  
21. JULI 1972

Sekretariat des Ministers  
Dag.: 19. JULI 1972

MINISTRULUI APARARII NATIONALE A R.D. GERMANE

Tovarășului general de armată HEINZ HOFFMAN

Or. BERLIN

Stimate tovarășe ministru,

În perioada 16-18 februarie a.c. s-a desfășurat la Budapesta consfătuirea reprezentanților cu munci de răspundere din ministerele apărării și ministerele industriale ale statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia, care a analizat problema utilității și posibilității coordonării eforturilor în crearea mijloacelor unificate ale sistemului automatizat de conducere a trupelor de uscat, în campanie.

Potrivit celor arătate de conducătorul delegației Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România, în cadrul lucrărilor consfătuirii, punctul nostru de vedere asupra problemelor discutate urma să fie comunicat ulterior tuturor participanților, după analizarea lor de către factorii de răspundere din țară.

În acest sens vă comunic că Ministerul Forțelor Armate este în principiu de acord cu :

- concepția teoretică a sistemului automatizat unitar de conducere a trupelor de uscat (divizie-armată-front), elaborată în comun sub conducerea Statului major al Forțelor Armate Unite, cu precizarea că unitatea sistemului se referă numai la organizarea generală pe subsisteme, la procedeele tehnice de prelucrare automată a informațiilor și la principalii parametri tehnici ai echipamentelor ;

. / .

## Relations between the GDR and Romania have been further strengthened

# Beziehungen DDR-Rumänien wurden weiter gefestigt

Politisches Exekutivkomitee des ZK der RKP zum Freundschaftsbesuch Erich Honeckers

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee des ZK der RKP hat sich, wie „Neues Deutschland“ bereits berichtet, am Mittwoch unter Vorsitz von Nicolae Ceausescu mit den Ergebnissen des Freundschaftsbesuches der DDR-Delegation unter Leitung Erich Honeckers in Rumänien befaßt. Die darüber von der amtlichen rumänischen Nachrichtenagentur Agerpres veröffentlichte Mitteilung hat folgenden Wortlaut:

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat eine von Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu dargelegte Information über den offiziellen Freundschaftsbesuch der Partei- und Staatsdelegation der DDR, geführt vom Genossen Erich Honecker, Generalsekretär des Zentralkomitees der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands und Vorsitzender des Staatsrates der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, in Rumänien gehört. Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat die Ergebnisse der Treffen und Gespräche zwischen den Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu und Erich Honecker einheitlich gebilligt und hoch gewürdigt. Es hat die außerordentliche Bedeutung dieses neuen Dialogs auf höchster Ebene zwischen den Führern beider Parteien und Staaten für die weitere Festigung der Beziehungen der Freundschaft und der aktiven Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei und der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands, zwischen Rumänien und der DDR, zwischen unseren Völkern unterstrichen.

Die Gefühle der Achtung und der Freundschaft, von denen unsere Völker erfüllt sind, haben während des Besuchs anlässlich der Überreichung des Karl-Marx-Ordens, der höchsten Auszeichnung der DDR, durch den Genossen Erich Honecker an den Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu eine weitere Bestätigung gefunden. Der Orden wurde aus Anlaß des 80. Geburtstages und des 45. Jahrestages der revolutionären Tätigkeit für außerordentliche Verdienste im Kampf für Frieden und Solidarität, für die Verständigung zwischen den Völkern und für die Entwicklung kameradschaftlicher Beziehungen zwischen Rumänien und der DDR verliehen.

Die Gespräche zwischen den Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu und Erich Honecker, die in einer Atmosphäre der Freundschaft und des gegenseitigen Verständnisses verlaufen sind, haben die Entschlossenheit unserer Parteien und Länder ergeben, die gegenseitigen Beziehungen der brüderlichen Freundschaft und der multilateralen Zusammenarbeit auf

der Grundlage der Achtung der Prinzipien der Gleichberechtigung, der Unabhängigkeit und nationalen Souveränität, der Nichteinmischung in die inneren Angelegenheiten, des gegenseitigen kameradschaftlichen Hilfe und internationalen Solidarität im Interesse unserer Völker, der Festigung des Sozialismus, des Friedens und der Entspannung zu entwickeln und auszubauen.

Diese Entschlossenheit findet ihren überzeugenden Ausdruck in den beschlossenen Dokumenten sowie in den während des Besuchs getroffenen Vereinbarungen.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee unterstreicht die Bedeutung der von den Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu und Erich Honecker unterschriebenen gemeinsamen Erklärung. Es drückt seine Befriedigung aus über die Übereinkunft hinsichtlich der Koordinierung der nationalen Wirtschaftspläne im Zeitraum 1981 - 1985, die ein weiteres Ausdehnen der wirtschaftlichen, wissenschaftlich-technischen und kulturellen Zusammenarbeit zwischen unseren Ländern, ein wesentliches Anwachsen des Warenaustauschs, die Erweiterung der Kooperation und der Spezialisierung in der Produktion besonders auf solchen Gebieten wie Werkzeugmaschinenbau, metallurgische und energetische Ausrüstungen, elektro-technische und elektronische Ausrüstungen, Rechentechnik, Feinmechanik und Optik sowie in der chemischen Industrie, in der Landwirtschaft und in anderen Volkswirtschaftszweigen vorsieht.

Positiv eingeschätzt wurde das Programm der Hauptziele der Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet von Wissenschaft und Technik für den Zeitraum 1981 - 1985, das eine Intensivierung der gegenseitigen Zusammenarbeit bei Fragen der Grundstoff- und Energieressourcen, der Industrie und der Landwirtschaft vorsieht. Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat ferner die Bedeutung des Beschlusses beider Staaten unterstrichen, auf der Basis langfristiger Verträge die Zusammenarbeit auf den Gebieten Kultur, Wissenschaft, Bildungswesen, Gesundheitswesen, Tourismus und Sport weiter zu entwickeln. Dies wird nach seiner Meinung zur Vertiefung des gegenseitigen Kennenlernens beider Völker und zur Entwicklung der Freundschaft zwischen ihnen beitragen. Unterstrichen wurde die Bedeutung der Übereinkunft über die weitere Entwicklung des Erfahrungsaustausches auf allen Gebieten des sozialistischen Aufbaus zwischen beiden Parteien und Ländern.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat den Meinungsaustausch zwischen den Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu und Erich Honecker zu Problemen der gegenwärtigen internationalen Lage und der kommunistischen und Arbeiterbewegung hoch eingeschätzt und mit großer Befriedigung den Beschluß beider Länder zur Kenntnis genommen, ihre Zusammenarbeit in der internationalen Arena im Kampf für die Durchsetzung der Politik des Friedens, der Sicherheit, der Entspannung und der Zusammenarbeit in der Welt noch mehr zu festigen.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee drückt seine volle Zustimmung aus gegenüber den Schlußfolgerungen, zu denen die beiden Führer von Partei und Staat hinsichtlich der Haupttendenzen des internationalen Lebens gekommen sind. Es bekundet seine Zustimmung zum Willen unserer beiden Staaten, noch intensiver zu handeln für die Beendigung der Verschärfung des internationalen politischen Klimas und die Verhinderung der Politik, die auf Spannung und kalten Krieg gerichtet ist, für die Verteidigung und Fortsetzung des Entspannungskurses, für die Beseitigung alles dessen aus den Beziehungen zwischen den Staaten, was diesen Prozeß bremst, der Methoden des Drucks und des Diktats, der Einmischung in innere Angelegenheiten anderer Staaten.

Es wurde die Bedeutung der Entschlossenheit beider Parteien betont, für die Reduzierung der Militärausgaben, der Stärke der Streitkräfte und Rüstungen, für die Auflösung der fremden Militärstützpunkte und den Rückzug der Truppen von fremden Territorien, für die Gründung atomwaffenfreier Zonen und Zonen des Friedens in den verschiedensten Gebieten der Welt, einschließlich in Europa, zu kämpfen. Als Teilnehmerstaaten des Verteidigungsabkommnisses einiger sozialistischer Länder unterstützen Rumänien und die DDR die gleichzeitige Auflösung der NATO und des Warschauer Vertrages und - als ersten Schritt - die Auflösung der Militärorganisationen beider Gruppierungen, beginnend mit der beiderseitigen Reduzierung militärischer Aktivitäten.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat den Willen Rumäniens und der DDR, hoch gewürdigt, zusammen mit den anderen sozialistischen Staaten, mit allen europäischen Ländern zu wirken für die konsequente und vollständige Verwirklichung der Schlußakte von Helsinki und in diesem Sinne für

die gute Vorbereitung des Treffens von Madrid, das in erster Linie zu praktischen Maßnahmen der militärischen Entspannung und der Abrüstung des Kontinents führen soll.

Beide Seiten haben die Notwendigkeit unterstrichen, daß die NATO-Länder den Beschluß über die Produktion und Stationierung neuer Atomraketen in Europa annullieren oder aufschieben und so Bedingungen für den Beginn von Verhandlungen schaffen. Es ist notwendig, zu einer Übereinkunft über die Beseitigung der Raketen sowohl der einen als auch der anderen Seite zu gelangen. Rumänien und die DDR sind entschlossen, zusammen mit den anderen Teilnehmerstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages, mit anderen sozialistischen Ländern, mit allen friedliebenden Staaten, mit den fortschrittlichen und demokratischen Kräften in der ganzen Welt für die Verwirklichung der Vorschläge zu wirken, die in den Dokumenten formuliert sind, die in Warschau angenommen wurden.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee würdigt die Bedeutung der Tatsache, daß sich Rumänien und die DDR für die Beseitigung der Gewalt und der Gewaltandrohung aus dem internationalen Leben, für die Achtung der Prinzipien des Völkerrechts in den zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen, für die Teilnahme aller Staaten am internationalen Leben auf der Basis völliger Gleichberechtigung, für die Lösung aller Konfliktherde in Europa, im Nahen Osten, in Afrika und Asien auf friedlichem Wege durch Verhandlungen, für Maßnahmen zur Liquidierung der Unterentwicklung und zur Schaffung einer neuen internationalen Wirtschaftsordnung aussprechen.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hebt die Bedeutung der erneuten Bestätigung der Entschlossenheit der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei und der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands seitens der Genossen Nicolae Ceausescu und Erich Honecker hervor, aktiv beizutragen zur weiteren Festigung der Einheit und Zusammenarbeit zwischen den kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien sowie der Zusammenarbeit mit den sozialistischen und sozialdemokratischen Parteien, mit allen demokratischen und fortschrittlichen Parteien, mit allen friedliebenden Kräften für die Entspannung und Abrüstung, für nationale Unabhängigkeit, sozialen Fortschritt und Frieden.

Das Politische Exekutivkomitee hat die vereinbarten Dokumente und Übereinkommen einstimmig gebilligt. Es hat die Regierung und die Ministerien beauftragt, mit aller Konsequenz und Entschlossenheit zu handeln für die Verwirklichung dieser Dokumente und Übereinkommen, die zur Entwicklung der Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen Rumänien und der DDR im Interesse des Wohlstandes beider Völker, der allgemeinen Sache des Sozialismus, des Fortschritts und des Friedens in der Welt beitragen.

## The President of Romania begins goodwill visit today

### Nicolae Ceaușescu

**Generalsekretär der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei und Präsident der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien**

Nicolae Ceaușescu, Generalsekretär der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei und Präsident der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien, wurde am 26. Januar 1918 im Dorf Scornicești, Bezirk Olt, in einer armen Bauernfamilie geboren.

Nach Abschluß seiner Grundschulausbildung ging er 1929 nach Bukarest, wo er eine Lehre aufnahm. In den Jahren 1931-1932 beteiligte er sich aktiv an der Gewerkschaftsbewegung, und 1933 trat er in die Reihen des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes ein; im selben Jahr wurde er Mitglied der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei.

Als Repräsentant der demokratischen Jugend wurde Nicolae Ceaușescu im Juni 1933 zum Mitglied des Nationalen Antifaschistischen Komitees gewählt.

Von 1935 bis 1936 war er Sekretär der Organisation des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes von Bukarest, später arbeitete er als Sekretär verschiedener regionaler Komitees des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes. Im Jahre 1936 wurde er festgenommen und zu langjähriger Haft verurteilt, die er in dem berüchtigten Gefängnis von Doftana verbüßte, wo hervorragende Kämpfer der Kommunistischen Partei und des antifaschistischen Kampfes eingekerkert waren.

Nach seiner Haftentlassung setzte er im Dezember 1938 seine revolutionären Aktivitäten fort. Er leistete einen entscheidenden Beitrag zur Vorbereitung und zum Verlauf der Nationalen Konferenz des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes vom Oktober 1939, die ihn zum Sekretär des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes wählte. Er beteiligte sich aktiv an der Organisation der großen Demonstration, die am 1. Mai 1939 in Bukarest stattfand, sowie anderer Veranstaltungen, die Ausdruck für die Entschlossenheit der Arbeiterklasse und der progressiven Kräfte Rumäniens waren, Faschismus und Krieg den Weg zu versperren, Demokratie, Unabhängigkeit und Souveränität des Vaterlandes zu verteidigen.

Von den Sicherheitsorganen verfolgt, wurde er in Abwesenheit vom Standgericht zu vier Jahren Haft verurteilt. Seit seiner Festnahme, im August 1940 wurde er in den Gefängnissen von Jilova, Caransebes, Vacaresti und im Lager für politische Häftlinge von Tirgu Jui gefangengehalten.

Zusammen mit anderen verhafteten oder sich in Freiheit befindlichen Kommunisten entfaltete er große Aktivitäten, um alle demokratischen und patriotischen Kräfte im Kampf für die Befreiung des Landes von der faschistischen Herrschaft zu vereinen.

Nach dem Sieg der sozialen und der nationalen antifaschistischen und



antimperialistischen Befreiungsrevolution vom August 1944 setzte er sich unermüdlich dafür ein, daß unter den neuen Bedingungen die Aktivität der Partei und der kommunistischen Jugend reorganisiert werden. Er nahm an allen großen Klassenkämpfen dieser Zeit aktiven Anteil. Ihm wurde das Amt des Generalsekretärs des Kommunistischen Jugendverbandes übertragen.

Im Oktober 1945 wurde er auf der Nationalen Konferenz der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei zum Mitglied des Zentralkomitees gewählt. Seit dieser Zeit gehört Genosse Nicolae Ceaușescu ununterbrochen den führenden Organen der RKP an.

Bei den Parlamentswahlen, die im November 1946 den Sieg der von der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei geführten demokratischen Kräfte besiegelte haben, wurde er in die Abgeordnetenversammlung gewählt.

In den Jahren 1948-1950 übte er das Amt des stellvertretenden Landwirtschaftsministers aus; er hat somit einen maßgeblichen Anteil an der Ausarbeitung und Realisierung des Landwirtschaftsprogramms der Partei.

Im Jahre 1950 befindet er sich an der Spitze der Obersten Politischen Führung der Armee; er bekleidet zugleich das Amt des stellvertretenden Ministers der Streitkräfte.

Neben seinen politischen Aktivitäten brachte er seine theoretische, politische und fachliche Ausbildung zum Abfluß. Er nahm an Speziallehrgängen der Militärakademie teil und absolvierte die Lehrgänge der Akademie für Wirtschaftsstudien von Bukarest und der Akademie für Gesellschafts- und Staatswissenschaften „Stefan Gheorghiu“ beim ZK der RKP.

1952 wurde Nicolae Ceaușescu Mitglied des Organisationsbüros des ZK der RKP und 1954 zum Sekretär des ZK der RKP gewählt. Auf dem VII. Parteitag der RKP, der im Dezember 1955 stattfand, legte er den Bericht über das neue Parteistatut vor; er wurde zum Mitglied des Politbüros und Sekretär des ZK der RKP gewählt. Auf dem VIII. Parteitag der RKP vom Juni 1960 wurde

(Fortsetzung auf Seite 2)

Rajiv Gandhi:

### Reise in UdSSR sehr erfolgreich

Pressekonferenz nach Rückkehr

Dehli (ADN). Als „sehr erfolgreich“ hat Indiens Ministerpräsident Rajiv Gandhi die Ergebnisse seiner Reise in die Sowjetunion bewertet, von der er am Sonntag nach Dehli zurückkehrte. Auf einer Pressekonferenz unmittelbar nach seiner Ankunft erklärte er, die während des Besuchs unterzeichneten Abkommen dienten der Vertiefung und Erweiterung der bewährten Kooperation zwischen beiden Ländern und seien für beide Seiten nutzbringend. Seine Gespräche mit dem Generalsekretär des ZK der KPdSU, Michail Gorbatschow, seien sehr freundschaftlich und inhaltsreich verlaufen.

Gandhi bekräftigte das Nein seiner Regierung zu den Plänen Washingtons für eine Weltraumrüstung, weil dies zu einer neuen, noch gefährlicheren Dimension des Wettlaufens führen würde. Er würdigte die sehr positive Haltung der Sowjetunion gegenüber der Bewegung der Nichtpakgebundenen. Sie sehe in ihr eine wichtige Kraft des Friedens, der Völkerverständigung und der Zusammenarbeit.

Als neue Etappe bei der Erweiterung der Zusammenarbeit zwischen Indien und der Sowjetunion wertete der Generalsekretär des Nationalrates der Kommunistischen Partei Indiens, Chandra Rajeswara Rao, den UdSSR-Besuch von Rajiv Gandhi.

### Niederlande: Nein zu Flügelraketen

Volksbefragung angekündigt

Amsterdam (ADN). In den Niederlanden dürfen keine Cruise Missiles stationiert werden, betonte Siemte Siirikwerda, Vorsitzende vom „Komitee Flügelraketen Nein“, das am Wochenende in Utrecht tagte. Auf der Beratung des Komitees, in dem niederländische Friedensbewegungen, Linksparteien und der Gewerkschaftsbund FNV zusammenarbeiten, verurteilten zahlreiche Teilnehmer die USA-Pläne zur Militarisierung des Weltraums.

Als bisher größte Massenkaktion gegen die Stationierung der USA-Raketen in den Niederlanden bereitet das Komitee für den Herbst eine Volksbefragung vor. Das Kabinett in Den Haag will Anfang November über die Stationierung entscheiden.

### Schweden gegen „Sternenkrieg“

Reichstag lehnt USA-Pläne ab

Stockholm (ADN). Die „Sternenkriegs“-Pläne der USA hat der schwedische Reichstag in einer Entscheidung verurteilt. Ein solches Projekt könne zum Wettrennen im Weltraum und zur Entwicklung einer neuen Generation von Kernwaffen führen. Die Regierung wurde beauftragt, die Verhandlungen zwischen der UdSSR und den USA in Genf zu verfolgen und danach zu streben, daß dort ein Abkommen zur Verhinderung der Militarisierung des Weltraums getroffen wird.

**ichte Bangladeshs:  
irm forderte**

# Nicolae Ceaușescu

(Fortsetzung von Seite 1)

er in die gleichen Funktionen wiedergewählt.

Sich für die Verbesserung der Aktivitäten der Parteiorganisationen einsetzend, leistete er einen hervorragenden Beitrag zur Erhöhung der führenden Rolle der Partei beim Aufbau des Sozialismus. Zugleich erfüllte er zahlreiche Aufgaben im Bereich der Beziehungen der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei zu anderen kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien.

In Würdigung seiner reichen Erfahrungen und seiner herausragenden Eigenschaften eines revolutionären kommunistischen Kämpfers übertrug ihm das Plenum des ZK der RKP im März 1965 die höchste Verantwortung innerhalb der Parteiführung, nämlich die des Ersten Sekretärs des Zentralkomitees der Partei.

Auf dem IX. Parteitag im Juli 1965 wurde Nicolae Ceaușescu zum Generalsekretär des ZK der RKP gewählt. Durch die Beschlüsse, die auf der Grundlage des durch Genossen Ceaușescu vorgelegten Berichts gefaßt wurden, errang der IX. Parteitag historische Bedeutung, leitete er doch einen neuen Kurs in der sozialistischen Entwicklung Rumäniens ein.

Seit Dezember 1967 ist Nicolae Ceaușescu Vorsitzender des Staatsrates der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien.

Der X. Parteitag wählte ihn im August 1969 zum Generalsekretär der Rumänischen Kommunistischen Partei; in dieser Funktion wurde er vom XI. (1974), XII. (1979) und XIII. (1984) Parteitag wiedergewählt.

Auf der Festtagung der Großen Volksversammlung am 28. März 1974 wurde er entsprechend dem einheitlichen Willen der ganzen Nation in die höchste Funktion des Präsidenten der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien berufen. In diese Funktion wurde er am 19. März 1975, am 28. März 1980 und am 29. März 1985 wiedergewählt.

Nicolae Ceaușescu ist Vorsitzender der Front der Sozialistischen Demokratie und Einheit seit ihrer Gründung im November 1968.

Seit 1973 ist er ebenfalls Vorsitzender des Obersten Rates der ökonomischen und sozialen Entwicklung und seit 1977 Präsident des Nationalrates der Werktätigen.

Er ist Oberbefehlshaber der Streitkräfte des Landes und Vorsitzender des Verteidigungsrates der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien.

Unter unmittelbarer Führung und entscheidender Beteiligung des Präsidenten Nicolae Ceaușescu wurde das Programm der RKP zum Aufbau der allseitig entwickelten

sozialistischen Gesellschaft und zum Voranschreiten Rumäniens zum Kommunismus ausgearbeitet, das im November 1974 auf dem XI. Parteitag angenommen wurde.

An der Spitze der Partei und des Staates fördert Nicolae Ceaușescu mit Entschlossenheit eine Politik zur Beschleunigung des ökonomischen und sozialen Fortschritts Rumäniens, zur intensiven Entwicklung und Modernisierung der Produktivkräfte, zum Aufschwung von Wissenschaft, Bildung und Kultur, zur stetigen Vervollkommnung der Produktionsverhältnisse, zur Gestaltung und Leitung der Gesellschaft, zur Vertiefung der sozialistischen Demokratie und zur entschlossenen Verwirklichung der Prinzipien der sozialistischen Ethik und Gerechtigkeit, zur ständigen Erhöhung des materiellen und geistigen Lebensniveaus des ganzen Volkes.

Als Partei- und Staatschef prägt er eine im Dienste des Friedens und der Völkerverständigung stehende Außenpolitik Rumäniens und legt dabei besonderen Wert auf die konsequente Förderung der Prinzipien der Unabhängigkeit und der nationalen Souveränität, der Gleichberechtigung, der Nichteinmischung in die inneren Angelegenheiten und des gegenseitigen Vorteils, auf die Entwicklung der Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit mit allen sozialistischen Ländern sowie den Entwicklungsländern, auf die Erweiterung der Beziehungen zu anderen Staaten unabhängig von ihrer Gesellschaftsordnung, die Stärkung der kämpferischen Solidarität mit allen kommunistischen und Arbeiterparteien, mit der progressiven revolutionären und antimperialistischen Bewegung der ganzen Welt. Präsident Nicolae Ceaușescu statete zahlreichen Ländern Europas, Afrikas, Asiens und Amerikas Besuche ab.

Die Berichte, Reden, Artikel und Interviews des Präsidenten Nicolae Ceaușescu wurden in Bukarest in 27 Bänden veröffentlicht.

Er ist Doktor der Ökonomie der Akademie für ökonomische Studien von Bukarest und Doktor für politische Wissenschaften der Akademie „Stefan Gheorghiu“.

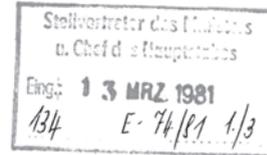
Nicolae Ceaușescu ist Ehrenpräsident der Akademie für gesellschaftliche und politische Wissenschaften Rumäniens. Ihm wurde der Titel Dr. honoris causa der Universität Bukarest und vieler ausländischer Universitäten verliehen.

Er wurde mit zahlreichen rumänischen und ausländischen Orden, Auszeichnungen und Medaillen geehrt. Ihm wurde dreimal der höchste Titel „Held der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien“ verliehen.

REPUBLICA SOCIALISTĂ ROMÂNIA


 MINISTERUL APĂRĂRII NAȚIONALE  
 -ADJUNCT AL MINISTERULUI APĂRĂRII NAȚIONALE  
 ȘI ȘEF AL MARELUI STAT MAJOR

București, 26 februarie 1981



*Scrisoare stimată tovarășe General,*

Din dorința întăririi și dezvoltării pe mai departe a relațiilor de prietenie dintre armatele noastre, îmi este plăcut să vă adresez invitația ca, împreună cu o delegație militară, să efectuați, în anul 1981, o vizită oficială în Republica Socialistă România.

Îmi exprim convingerea că vizita Dumneavoastră, contactul nemijlocit cu realizările și frumusețile țării noastre, cu unele preocupări ale militarilor români, dialogul prietenesc pe care-l vom avea, vor contribui la o mai bună cunoaștere și înțelegere reciprocă.

În vederea întocmirii unui program cât mai util și plăcut, v-aș fi recunoscător dacă ne veți comunica perioada convenabilă, compunerea delegației, precum și eventualele preferințe privind efectuarea vizitei. Avînd în vedere clima din țara noastră am sugera ca vizita să aibă loc în luna august, perioada cea mai favorabilă pentru organizarea programului Dumneavoastră. Problemele de detaliu urmează să fie puse de acord prin intermediul atașajilor noștri militari.

. / .

Hauptabteilung I  
Abteilung MfNV

Strausberg, 5. 1. 1984 BStU  
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Leiter der Hauptabteilung I  
Genossen Generalmajor Dietze

I n f o r m a t i o n  
zur Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien

Vom 12. bis 14. Dezember 1983 befand sich eine Delegation des Bereiches Technik/Bewaffnung des MfNV unter Leitung des Kommandeurs des Militärtechnischen Institutes, Generalmajor M ü l l e r, zur jährlichen Koordinierungsabsprache mit dem gleichen Bereich der rumänischen Streitkräfte in Bukarest.

Im politisch-operativen Zusammenwirken mit Generalmajor Müller wurde im Ergebnis dessen folgende Information erarbeitet.

Die rumänische Delegation wurde vom Stellvertreter des Verteidigungsministers und Chef Technik/Bewaffnung, Generaloberst S t a n u l e s c u, geführt. Stanulescu spricht fließend deutsch und suchte das persönliche Gespräch mit Generalmajor Müller, um ihn ohne irgendwelche Zeugen über die derzeitige Lage in der SRR zu informieren. Dabei entstand der Eindruck, daß Stanulescu auf Teilgebieten mit der gegenwärtigen politischen Führung und der Entwicklung in der SRR nicht übereinstimmt.

Stanulescu bezeichnete die Energiesituation und die Versorgung der Bevölkerung als katastrophal. Die Wirtschaft wird neben dem Energieproblem durch einen Exportzwang von Nahrungsgütern belastet, womit die SRR Kredite zurückzahlen muß.

Zur Zeit erhält jeder PKW-Besitzer in Rumänien monatlich 20 Liter Benzin.

Aus dieser Situation sei kein Ausweg zu sehen. Jeden Tag würde zwar irgendetwas beschlossen, aber nichts davon würde realisiert.

Stanulescu brachte sein Interesse an einer engen Kooperation mit den "deutschen Genossen" bei der perspektivischen

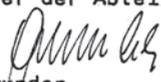
Waffenentwicklung zum Ausdruck. Er begründete dies damit, einig und geschlossen mit uns - auch mit gemeinsamen Waffenentwicklungen - gegen den Imperialismus kämpfen zu wollen.

BStU  
000133

Ein Bezugspunkt zur Rolle der Sowjetunion und zur Freundschaft mit ihr wurde von beiden Gesprächspartnern nicht hergestellt. Enttäuscht bezeichnete Stanulescu die derzeitige Entwicklung in der SRR als sehr bitter.

Ich bitte um Kenntnisnahme.

Leiter der Abteilung

  
Grawunder  
Oberst

99



**BOTSCHAFT**  
der  
**SOZIALISTISCHEN REPUBLIK RUMÄNIEN**  
Berlin

Berlin, den 14. Februar 1985

Militär-, Luftwaffen- und Marineattaché



Chef der Verwaltung  
Internationale Verbindungen des  
Ministeriums für Nationale Verteidigung

Genossen  
Generalmajor Heinrich W i n k l e r

Sehr geehrter Genosse Generalmajor !

Das Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien, bitte das Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, dem in der DDR akkreditierten Militär-, Luftwaffen- und Marineattaché, Oberst B u r b u l e a, eine Konsultation über:

- ob es in der NVA Erholungsheime für die Armeekader gibt?
- wem solche Erholungsheime untergeordnet sind ?
- Wie viele von solche Erholungsheime es gibt ?
- Wie oft und wie lange kann man solche Erholungsheime in einem Jahr benützen ?
- Welche sind die Bedingungen (Unterkunft und Essen) in solche Erholungsheime?
- Wer übernimmt die Kosten für die Unterkunft in diesen Erholungsheimen und wie hoch sind diese Kosten ?

zu geben.

Nehmen Sie, sehr geehrter Genosse Generalmajor, den Ausdruck meiner vorzüglichsten Hochachtung entgegen.

Mit sozialistischem Gruss !

Mihai B u r b u l e a  
Oberst

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Verwaltung  
Internationale Verbindungen

O. U., den 17. 08. 1989

## Aktennotiz

über: Vortrag des MA der SRR im Politorgan des Hauptstabes des MfNV anlässlich des Nationalfeiertages (45. Jahrestag der Revolution)

Datum/Zeit: 15. 08. 1989, 13.15 - 17.00 Uhr

Ort: MfNV und TAZ

Teilnehmer:	Oberst	Burbulea	MA
	Generalmajor	Kusch	STCHS u. CPO
	Oberst	Pilz	Stellv. f. Prop.
	Oberstleutnant	Kohlert	OOffz. PO
	Major	Gaube	VIV

Ablauf: (1.) 13.15 Uhr Begrüßung, Vorgespräch  
(2.) 14.00 Uhr Vortrag MA  
(3.) 14.30 Uhr Filmvorführung "Für nationale Unabhängigkeit, Frieden und Freiheit"  
(4.) 15.30 Uhr Imbiß und Abschlußgespräch im TAZ  
(5.) 17.00 Uhr Verabschiedung

Zu 1.

- Auf Bitten von GM Kusch, vielleicht doch noch auf einige Fragen der Hörer einzugehen, einigte man sich, daß der MA kein Mandat dazu habe und mit Film und Vortrag alle Fragen beantwortet seien.
- GM Kusch informierte über die Nutzung einer zentralen Ausbildungsmaßnahme für Polit-Stellvertreter, in die der Auftritt des MA eingebettet sei und schilderte die angenehmen Eindrücke, die GO Brünner von seinem kürzlichen Besuch in der SRR mitgebracht hat (45 min. Visite bei Gen. Ceausescu; kein armes Land, da viele Autos; eine der wenigen echten Banken des Sozialismus);
- der MA freue sich schon auf seine Pensionierung (Rente beträgt 80 % des jetzigen Verdienstes, paradiesische Lage seines Hauses, 1 ha Garten); über seinen Nachfolger (ob überhaupt, Status) sei noch alles offen,
- auf die direkte Anfrage GM Kusch's, vielleicht mal sein Zelt im Garten des MA's aufstellen zu dürfen, ging er nicht ein.

Zu 2.

Der Vortrag des MA (in deutsch gehalten) war flach und ohne besondere Ausstrahlung, z. T. bedingt durch die Sprachbarriere. Inhaltlich wurde kurz angerissen:

- historische Aspekte der Revolution von 1944,
- Etappen des sozialistischen Aufbaus in der SRR,

Nicolae Ceaușescu received Military Officials of the GDR in Bucharest,  
*Neues Deutschland*, July 21, 1989

Neues Deutschland

## ung etrieb

### Einweihung sonloge

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## Miloš Jakeš sprach mit Yasser Arafat

Prag (ADN). Der Generalsekretär des ZK der KP Tsch, Miloš Jakeš, hat am Donnerstag in Prag den Vorsitzenden des Exekutivkomitees der Palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation (PLO), Yasser Arafat, Präsident des Staates Palästina, empfangen, der sich zu einem kurzen Arbeitsbesuch in der CSSR aufhält.

Miloš Jakeš sagte bei der Unterredung laut ČTK, die CSSR setze sich im Interesse der Lösung des Nahostkonflikts für eine internationale Konferenz unter Teilnahme aller interessierten Seiten, einschließlich der PLO und Israels, ein.

Yasser Arafat erklärte, die PLO werde auch in Zukunft an ihrem flexiblen, doch prinzipiellen politischen Kurs festhalten. Ziel dieser Politik sei die Gewährleistung der legitimen Rechte des palästinensischen Volkes.

## Havanna: Fidel Castro weihete Polikliniken ein

Havanna (ADN). Der Sozialismus unterscheide sich vom Kapitalismus durch seine großen menschlichen und moralischen Werte, betonte Fidel Castro, Erster Sekretär des ZK der KP Kubas und Vorsitzender des Staatsrates und des Ministerrates, bei der Einweihung von sechs Polikliniken und einem Altenpflegeheim in Havanna. Nur im Sozialismus sei eine Entwicklung des Gesundheitswesens so wie in Kuba möglich. Castro würdigte die Erfolge in der Gesundheitsfürsorge des Karibiklandes und verwies auf die niedrige Säuglingsterblichkeit, die 1968 erstmals unter 12 pro 1000 Lebendgeborene lag. Bis zum Jahresende sollen weitere 14 Polikliniken übergeben werden.

## Sprecher des bulgarischen Außenministeriums:

### Türkei sagte geplantes Gipfeltreffen ab

Sofia (ADN). Bulgarien hat mit großem Bedauern zur Kenntnis genommen, daß die Türkei ein für den 25. und 28. Juli in Wien vereinbartes Treffen zwischen dem Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der VRB Todor Shiwkow und dem türkischen Ministerpräsi-

## Nicolae Ceaușescu empfing DDR-Militär in Bukarest

### Beziehungen beider Parteien und Staaten gewürdigt

Bukarest (ADN). Der Generalsekretär der RKP und Präsident der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien, Nicolae Ceaușescu, hat in Bukarest den Stellvertreter des Minister für Nationale Verteidigung der DDR und Chef der Politischen Hauptverwaltung der NVA, Generaloberst Horst Brünner, Mitglied des ZK der SED, zu einem freundschaftlichen Gespräch empfangen. Nicolae Ceaușescu erwiderte die übermittelten Grüße des Generalsekretärs des ZK der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR, Erich Honecker, auf das herzlichste. Er würdigte die guten Beziehungen zwischen beiden Parteien und Staaten und betonte, deren Übereinstimmung im Kampf um die Sicherung des Friedens und zur weiteren Stärkung des Sozialismus. Nicolae Ceaușescu informierte über die großen Leistungen des rumänischen Volkes unter Führung der RKP in Vorbereitung des 45. Jahrestages der antifaschistischen, antimperialistischen Revolution der nationalen und sozialen Befreiung und des XIV. Parteitages der RKP.

Generaloberst Brünner, der eine Delegation von Polit- und Parteiarbeitern der NVA leitete, berichtete über die Vorbereitung der Werkstätten der DDR auf den 40. Jahrestag der Gründung der DDR und den XII. Parteitag der SED. In den Streitkräften sei es Anliegen, auf allen Gebieten des politischen und militärischen Lebens hohe Leistungen zu vollbringen und einen aktiven Beitrag zur Verwirklichung der Militärdoktrin der Staaten des Warschauer Vertrages zu leisten.

Am selben Tag war die NVA-Delegation vom Kandidaten des Politischen Exekutivkomitees des ZK der RKP, dem Minister für Nationale Verteidigung der SRR, Generaloberst Vasile Milea, zu einem Gespräch empfangen worden. Dabei würdigten die Gesprächspartner die traditionellen Beziehungen und die feste Waffenbrüderschaft zwischen den Armeen beider Länder. Generaloberst Horst Brünner überbrachte herzliche Grüße des Mitglieds des Politbüros des ZK der SED und Ministers für Nationale Verteidigung der DDR, Heinz Kessler, die vom SRR-Verteidigungsminister erwidert wurden.

## Oberstudienrätin wurde von BRD-Gericht degradiert

### Proteste erzwangen jedoch Aufhebung des Berufsverbots

Lüneburg (ADN). Mit einem Teilerfolg, aber ohne Freispruch, endete am späten Donnerstagabend vor dem niedersächsischen Disziplinarhof beim Oberverwaltungsgericht Lüneburg das Berufungsverfahren, das die Oldenburger Lehrerin Irmelin Schacht-schneider gegen das vom Land Niedersachsen verhängte Berufsverbot angestrengt hatte. Nach 13stündiger Verhandlung hoben die Richter die vor zwei Jahren verfügte Entfernung der 54jährigen Pädagogin aus dem Schuldienst auf. Doch sie degradierten Oberstudienrätin Irmelin Schacht-schneider, Mutter von vier Kindern, die bei Wahlen für die DKP kandidiert hatte und sich in der Friedens- und Gewerkschaftsarbeit engagiert, zur Studienrätin. Der Vorsitzende Richter

behauptete bei der Begründung der Entscheidung, daß die Lehrerin mit ihrem politischen Engagement ein schweres Dienstvergehen begangen habe.

Prozessbeobachter stellten fest, daß die massiven Proteste gegen die Berufsverbotspolitik zur teilweisen Aufhebung des Gesinnungsurteils beigetragen haben. Zugleich äußerten sie Zweifel, ob damit die Verfolgung von Irmelin Schacht-schneider ein Ende gefunden hat.

Während des Prozesses hatte die Lehrerin ihr politisches Engagement begründet. Persönliche Erfahrungen des Krieges, aber NATO-Raketenbeschluß, der auch Mangel an Ausbildungsplätzen, von dem zunehmend ihre Schüler betroffen seien, hätten sie in ihrem Handeln bestärkt.

# THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ROMANIA AND THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND THE VIEW ON THE WARSAW TREATY. ASPECTS REGARDING THE OFFICIAL ROMANIAN EAST-GERMAN RELATIONS AT THE LEVEL OF THE DEFENCE MINISTERS, 1955-1989

MANUEL STĂNESCU, PhD

## **Romania – German Democratic Republic. A difficult relation**

The relations of Romania with the German Democratic Republic during the period when both were part of the Warsaw Treaty were under the sign of their geopolitical and geostrategic situation, equally similar and different. At the outbreak of the Cold War, both Romania and the GDR were part of the sphere of influence established by the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe under the umbrella of the Warsaw Treaty (from 1955) until the late '80s, when the communist regimes in East Europe collapsed.

Within the alliance, however, their geostrategic position was different. Created by the Soviets in the former occupation region, the GDR was on the ideological front line separating the “socialist camp” from the West organized under NATO aegis. Naturally, the East German state had a special political and military importance for the Soviet Union, as shown by the impressive military arsenal maintained here. Consequently, Moscow maintained very strict control, which gave Berlin an extremely limited space for manoeuvre. The support given by the Soviet Union to the GDR also had a powerful propaganda substrate, which was to be a true “showcase of socialism”, the successes were to demonstrate by the superiority of the socialist organization.

Romania, on the other hand, being devoid of a direct border with the West, had a smaller geostrategic importance. As a result, Khrushchev ordered the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1958, during which time he pursued a policy of relaxation towards the West. At the same time, the regime in Bucharest, led by Gheorghie Gheorghiu-Dej, initiated a policy of autonomy over the hegemonic power, theorized by what was called the “April 1964 Declaration”. This attitude of (limited) contestation of Soviet hegemony and collaboration with Western countries influenced the political and military relations between Romania and the Soviet Union and, implicitly, all the Eastern European states.<sup>1</sup> It was based, as American historian Dennis Deletant shows, one of the Western researchers with a thorough knowledge of the problem, on the distinction made by Romanian leaders between the Soviet model of development, which they have kept intact, and the Soviet Union, as a hegemon of the Eastern European bloc.<sup>2</sup>

The causes that have generated the autonomy policy of Bucharest within the European bloc and the complex consequences, internal and international, have been and are subject to heated debates in the academic environment, of which the controversies are not missing.<sup>3</sup> If from 1947 (when the political regime supported by Moscow strengthened internally)

and until 1958 Romania was considered one of the most faithful executors of the political-economic-doctrinal directives from the east (proved by the position of Bucharest in the Yugoslav and Hungarian crises), the withdrawal of Soviet troops in August 1958 was the signal for a very timid, at first, detachment from hegemonic power. The detachment becomes more and more evident with the taking over of power by Nicolae Ceaușescu after the death of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (March 1965) and reaches the culminating moment in the late '60s. The international crises of this period (remember the Berlin crisis of 1961 and the missile crisis of Cuba in 1962) revealed, from Moscow's perspective, the need to increase the responsiveness of the countries of the Eastern European bloc in dispute with NATO or the People's Republic of China, the recent opponent, the purpose being to ensure a more effective control over the allies.

The Soviet Union envisaged a substantial change in the Warsaw Treaty governing bodies, ranging from the elaboration of new statutes for the Political Advisory Committee, the United Armed Forces, the Military Council of the United Armed Forces, until the creation of new management structures – the Foreign Policy Commission, as an auxiliary body of the Political Advisory Committee, the United Secretariat, the Defence Ministers Committee, the Military Technical Committee, etc. Romania was the only country that constantly opposed the proposals and projects promoted by the leader of the alliance. The authorities in Bucharest wanted all these new structures not to represent additional means, within the reach of Moscow, that could intervene in the Romanian political life.<sup>4</sup>

These debates were often tense and created a “rebel” image of the Romanian state in the Warsaw Treaty. This statute has contributed to the marginalization and (self) exclusion of Romania from the Alliance's decision-making process. The case of the intervention in Czechoslovakia is suggestive, as Romania was not invited to the political and military preparations of the summer of 1968. In these circumstances, the question of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev addressed to Nicolae Ceaușescu, during the May 1970 meeting, whether Romania

wishes to be part or not of the Warsaw Treaty, was somewhat justified.<sup>5</sup> But the exit from the Treaty was never taken into account by Nicolae Ceaușescu, at least not officially.

This position in the Treaty also had repercussions on the Romanian-East-German relations, Berlin being one of the faithful of Moscow. Not infrequently, the Soviet Union used GDR to promote some alliance reorganization projects. The Foreign Policy Commission, for example, was insistently requested by the authorities in East Berlin. They considered that the existence of such a body would have contributed to the unreserved support by the other Warsaw Pact countries of the position of GDR in the matter of relations with the other German state – the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>6</sup>

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1965, the East German authorities sent a letter to the partner countries proposing that on the agenda of the session of the Political Advisory Committee, which was to be held over a week in Warsaw, the problem of setting up the Foreign Policy Commission Treaty. The members of the Romanian delegation (Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Corneliu Mănescu) categorically refused to discuss this issue, the formal objection being the lack of mandate in the country. This gesture attracted, during the Warsaw conference (January 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 1965), reproaches on the part of Walter Ulbricht, the East German leader criticizing Romania for its refusal to accept the creation of such a body (which was otherwise agreed upon since the establishment of the organization). Leonid Brezhnev supported the East German position, which he considered “useful to our work”.<sup>7</sup> Despite the Soviet-East-German joint pressure, Romania refused to accept the creation of a body to coordinate the policy of the Warsaw Treaty member states, for almost a decade.

The already tense relations between Bucharest and Berlin were aggravated by the establishment of diplomatic relations between Romania and the Federal Republic of Germany, on January 31, 1967. The negotiations – started at the request of the Romanian side – were difficult due to the loyalty of the West German authorities to the “Hallstein” doctrine (named after its initiator, the West German

MFA Secretary of State Walter Hallstein who, in the name of the FRG government's claim to be the sole representative of the interests of the entire German people, considers as an "unfriendly act" a country's recognition of the GDR as a state by a country).<sup>8</sup> Deeply dissatisfied with this gesture, the East German authorities orchestrated a press campaign, by which the gesture of the Romanians was considered a betrayal of an ally and siding with the enemy.<sup>9</sup> It culminated in the appearance in the official "Neues Deutschland" of an article, taken over by other publications, in which Romania's foreign policy was criticized in very harsh terms.<sup>10</sup> This fact created a lot of tensions in Bucharest; on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Permanent Presidium (body replacing the Political Bureau) held a meeting, which decided that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the East-German ambassador in Bucharest that the action of the East-German press represents "an unfriendly act towards Romania and an interference in its internal affairs".<sup>11</sup> In response, it was decided that the central press in Romania would publish a response article, in which the significance of the gesture of January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1967 was approached. The Permanent Presidium threatened to boycott the consultation between the Foreign Ministers of the Treaty member countries, scheduled to start on February 7<sup>th</sup> in Berlin.<sup>12</sup> Eventually, through the intervention of the Soviets, a compromise was reached.

Romania's support for the idea of reunification of Germany was, moreover, a constant of its foreign policy. After expressing its opposition to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, Romania refused to sign any decision of the Warsaw Treaty that approved the separation of the two countries or declared that West Berlin belongs to the territory of East Germany. The importance of unification was related to the fact that, in the absence of a peace treaty with Germany after World War II, which would have ended this division, Eastern Europe still obeyed the provisions of the Potsdam armistice, which stipulated the division of Germany and the granting of rights to "the victorious countries in the Second World War to intervene against the former enemies". Ceaușescu personally explained to Henry Kissinger that the inclusion of the Pots-

dam decisions in article 53 of the UN Charter did nothing but give legitimacy to the Soviet Union's interference "in the internal affairs of former enemies", a provision to which "any interpretation" could be given. Instead, Germany's reunification would have put an end to the state of war under international law and "would have abolished the legal basis that allowed the Soviet Union to intervene in Eastern European countries".<sup>13</sup> Ceaușescu's insistence that unification "is not a matter for us to decide, but the German people" and the official position of Romania that it was a "mistake" for the West German government to be considered "fascist", have attracted harsh criticism from the Soviet Union and its most loyal allies, in this case the German Democratic Republic.<sup>14</sup>

Corneliu Mănescu, Romania's former foreign minister in the period 1961-1972, acknowledged, in an interview given after the 1989 Revolution, the difficult relationship with GDR: "*The East Germans have reproached us many things since the agreement for the operation of the commercial representatives with the FRG. I had informed my East German counterpart about the contents of the agreement, but he wanted to be sent the full text. What I didn't do. Dej considered this inappropriate in the relations of a state. We were not subordinate to anyone, we wanted to promote relations based on equality and mutual respect, why submit the content of our agreements to the approval of another state, if they respect the principles we declare publicly? But as we advanced in relations with the West Germans (and the first direct relationship took place at the level of economic delegations), we were facing increasing difficulties from the East Germans*".<sup>15</sup> All these tensions influenced the exchanges of political and military delegations, which remained at a modest level. Mănescu refers to his memories and other difficulties in dealing with Berlin officials: "*They [East Germans a.n.] did always tend to accuse the West Germans of fascism, as if a choice had been made of people before the division of the country. It was not by territorial units that the division would have been made as a proof of the divergences between the Great Powers, but on the basis of belonging to fascism or communism. I was criticized for saying in an interview with an American magazine, that the*

*Ludwig Erhard government is not a fascist government. The East German Communist leaders were more Catholic than the Pope!*<sup>16</sup>

The tensions between Romania and GDR continued even after January 1967. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1967, the Berlin Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted to the Romanian ambassador an *aide-memoire* requesting the Romanian Government to send an official note to the governments of all the countries with which it had relations, containing the specification that establishing relationships with Federal Republic of Germany was done without acknowledging its claim to be the sole representative of the German government. Moreover, such a position had to be expressed by a declaration of the Grand National Assembly. The East German authorities argued that such an action was caused by the actions of the West German government, which would have sent a note to its missions abroad stating their right to be the sole representative of the German people. The issues remained suspended after the international agenda was occupied by the Arab-Israeli conflict, which would again reveal divergent views between Romania and the entire Eastern bloc.<sup>17</sup>

Apart from this context, another problem in the Romanian-East-German bilateral relations was the lack of a mutual assistance treaty. After the forced integration of Romania into the Soviet sphere of influence, mutual assistance treaties were signed with the Eastern European countries in a similar position. Such documents were signed with Bulgaria (January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1948), Hungary (January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1948), the Soviet Union (February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1948), Czechoslovakia (July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1948) and Poland (January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1949). With GDR, a similar document was not signed; instead, on the occasion of Walter Ulbricht's visit to Bucharest, on October 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 1951, at that time vice president of the government, a series of financial and cultural arrangements were signed. Only one mutual assistance treaty was renewed within the established deadline: the one with Czechoslovakia, on the occasion of Nicolae Ceaușescu's visit from August 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 1968, just days before the invasion of the Warsaw Treaty Troops.<sup>18</sup> After the end of the "Czechoslovak crisis," Romania negotiated and renewed the alliance treaties between 1970-1972. As expected, negotiations with the East

German authorities were difficult, given the problems arising in the bilateral relations. In the September 1970 talks in Bucharest, East German diplomats proved more flexible, giving up some provisions that had blocked the negotiations. Thus, they agreed to delete the phrase "militarism and West German revenge", as well as any reference to the Potsdam agreements. In its turn, the Romanian delegation accepted some formulations proposed by East Germans, such as international law as the basis of relations between the two German states and managed to determine a new wording of article 9, regarding the status of Berlin. On September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1970, the Permanent Presidium approved the agreements reached regarding the mutual assistance treaty.<sup>19</sup>

### **Meetings at the level of the defence ministers, 1955-1989**

The relaxation involved in the Romanian-East-German bilateral relations from the beginning of the '70s was immediately felt in the military field. Between 1970 and 1972, the defence ministers of the two countries met twice, which led to increased cooperation in the field of security and defence.

In the period September 3<sup>rd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 1970, at the invitation of the Minister of Defence of the German Democratic Republic, Heinz Hoffman, a Romanian military delegation visited various military, economic and historical objectives for a week. The delegation led by lieutenant-general Ion Ioniță, who was the minister of the Armed Forces, included (among others) lieutenant-general Ion Coman, the deputy minister of the Armed Forces and secretary of the Superior Political Council, vice-admiral Grigore Marteuș, the commander of the Military Marine, and major-general Aurel Niculescu, the commander of military aviation. The delegation received a firm mandate regarding the assertion of Romania's position on foreign policy: "*for the strengthening of peace and security on the continent, it has a special significance in terms of international law of the German Democratic Republic, the establishment of normal relations between and with both German states, creating the conditions for their active participation in the normalization of the situation in Europe*".<sup>20</sup>

The objectives visited by the Romanian military delegation were wide, from military units and institutions to industrial, agricultural, tourist and historical objectives: a mechanized unit from Dresden, a tank unit, an aviation unit from Cottbus, the “Engels” Military Academy from Dresden, the Institute for mechanization and automation of troops (Dresden), a military unit on the Baltic Sea coast, the Border Guard Unit of the Brandenburg Gate. The seventh and final day of the visit was dedicated to the museum erected on the Buchenwald camp site. The delegation was not welcomed by Walter Ulbricht, the hosts claiming that the East German leader had a cold and fever. Although the documents in the Romanian military archives do not give other details, the feeling was rather a deliberate avoidance of the military delegation from Bucharest.<sup>21</sup>

The visit resulted in a clear relaxation of the bilateral relations, materialized in the subsequent signing of agreements and conventions in the economic-military field. Thus, in January 1971, at the invitation of the East German Defence Minister, Heinz Hoffmann, a Romanian military delegation, this time composed of specialists from the General Endowment Directorate, paid a visit to the German Democratic Republic, where an agreement was signed regarding the collaboration and cooperation in the production of military equipment. Also, the creation of a joint Romanian-German commission in the field of arms production was considered.<sup>22</sup>

In 1972 Romania took over the role of host, following a formal invitation by the minister of armed forces. The visit took place on April 17<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 1972, and important personalities from the East German military system were included in the delegation: the minister of national defence, army general Heinz Hoffmann, admiral Waldemar Werner, deputy minister and chief of the central political service, lieutenant general Siegfried Weiss, deputy minister of military training, lieutenant general Herbert Scheibe, chief of the Security Section at the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), the major-general Heinz Handke, the commander of the 11<sup>th</sup> mechanized division, 1<sup>st</sup> grade captain Hanz Hanzmann, the commander of Flotilla 1, colonel Egon Grünler, the

chief of staff of the air defence Division 3, colonel Harry Hothmann, the deputy head of the international relations Section, colonel Horst Beutling, the air and navy attaché of GDR in RSR, plus 4-5 accompanying officers.<sup>23</sup>

The visit was meticulously prepared by the Romanian authorities, who wished to offer the East German guests a similar experience to the one offered to the Romanian military delegation in 1970. The slogans with which the delegation was to be met at the different objectives to be visited were drafted with great attention. Precise indications were given to the central press, radio and television to reflect the visit to the parameters desired by the authorities. The newspapers received distinct themes by days. The entire delegation was decorated with the “Tudor Vladimirescu” medal, 2<sup>nd</sup> class.<sup>24</sup>

The delegation visited the Military Academy, the aircraft repair plant in Bacău, the Technical Institute for scientific research and design of the Ministry of Armed Forces, the artillery training centre, the truck factory in Braşov, the “Mircea cel Bătrân” marine active officers’ school. An essential document elaborated during the visit refers to the state of Romanian-East-German relations. One of the priorities of the Romanian party was the conclusion of the long-term agreement on reciprocal supplies of goods for the years 1971-1975, which provided for the development of trade relations between the two countries and the regulation of reciprocal supplies of arms and special products during 1971-1975, as well as the increase with 70% of the trade between the two countries, compared to the period 1966-1970. The aim was to deepen cooperation in the field of optical industry, in the manufacture of machine tools and other installations. Regarding international relations, Romania was in favour of recognizing the GDR, promoting normal relations between the two German states, specifying that “public opinion in our country welcomes the governmental negotiations between the GDR and the FRG”.<sup>25</sup>

Unlike his counterpart, Walter Ulbricht (who could not or did not want to meet with the Romanian military delegation), Nicolae Ceauşescu had an official meeting with the German delegation on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1972, attended

by – among others – Ion Gheorghe Maurer (president of the Council of Ministers), army general Ion Ioniță (minister of Armed Forces), Corneliu Mănescu (minister of foreign affairs) and general colonel Ion Gheorghe (chief of the General Staff). At the discussions there was also present Hans Voss, the ambassador of the German Democratic Republic in Bucharest.<sup>26</sup>

Nicolae Ceaușescu stressed in the opening of the discussions that *“it is very good that these exchanges of delegations have taken place. Of course, sharing experience is very useful. We believe that close cooperation should develop between our armies as well as in other fields of activity. Of course, we hope that we do not have to use the armies; therefore, we also strive for security in Europe, for relaxation; but, at the same time, we must be well prepared”*. Pointing out that Romania was making considerable efforts for its economic development (*“we could have done more, if we were not to spend so much with the army”*), Ceaușescu outlined Romania’s interest in reaching “European security and relaxation”. Starting from here, the leader from Bucharest expressed the hope that *“a greater collaboration can be achieved even in the field of military technology, especially since each country needs equipment and the cost of armament is quite expensive. A collaboration, in this regard, can help solve problems and ease the tasks of national economies”*.<sup>27</sup>

General Hoffman recalled the collaboration protocol in the “technical-scientific” field already signed between the two states, mentioning that *“in the technical field we have to cooperate more [...] our Party asks the same; so, there are no obstacles, except for the subjective weaknesses, for the development of the collaboration”*. Ceaușescu agreed, considering that together the two countries can produce a number of types of weapons, especially in the field of aviation, *“because we have an interest in producing fighter jets”*. Hoffman expressed scepticism about aviation: *“we tried to build a fighter plane. It cost 6 billion marks and eventually the plane crashed. That’s why I gave up. It is very difficult to build a modern aircraft, when there is a gap of 20-30 years, a period when no experience has been gained”*. Ceaușescu replied: *“It is true, but if we do nothing, this period increases”*.<sup>28</sup>

These bilateral meetings with military character prepared the ground for an evolution, let us call it natural, of the relations between the two states. A few weeks later, on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1972, during the visit to Romania of Erich Honecker (the new communist leader in Berlin) and Willy Stoph, the president of the Council of Ministers, the treaty of mutual assistance was signed, the first and only document of this kind of the history of Romanian-East-German relations, with a validity of 20 years, already mentioned. In the military field, the two sides made a commitment to support each other in the event of an attack by a state or a group of states. It should be noted that the document negotiated for three years was signed in a context of relaxation of East-West relations, a policy carried out by the West German chancellor Willy Brandt, through his *Ostpolitik*.

In this context, the economic relations and, in the alternative, the military ones, have experienced another dynamic during the decades 7 and 8 of the 20<sup>th</sup> century compared to the period 1955-1970, the emphasis being on technology. Thus, in the total of the commercial exchanges from 1976-1980, the share of cars and machines was 67%. During the same period, a number of 24 cooperation and “production specialization” actions were signed and carried out. In the next five years, 1981-1985, another 19 agreements were signed. Among the actions, we mention just a few: cooperation and specialization in the production of power transformers, pantograph electric separators, air compressors for brakes, 2400 hp Diesel locomotives, fittings, metallurgical equipment, active electronic components, spectacle lenses.<sup>29</sup> In 1985, the Joint Committee identified the directions of collaboration for the following five-year plan: programs in the fields of machine tools and machines for processing, general machines, agricultural machines and motor vehicles, the chemical industry, heavy machinery construction and installations.<sup>30</sup>

The third and last Romanian-East-German meeting with defence ministers in 1955-1989 was held in May 1982, also in Romania. The East German delegation: Heinz Hoffmann, a member of the C.C. Political Bureau of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), the minister of

national defence of the GDR and the leader of the delegation; general-colonel Wolfgang Reinhold, deputy minister of national defence and commander of military aviation and air defence; lieutenant general Horst Bruner, deputy chief of the main political direction of the army; vice-admiral Gustav Hesse, chief of staff of the navy; lieutenant general Manfred Gehmert, military region commander; general-lieutenant professor Dr. Hans Rudolf Gestewitz, head of the Academy of Military Medicine; major-general Heinrich Winkler, head of the International Relations Division and colonel Joachim Schröter, air and navy military attaché.<sup>31</sup>

Following the scenario of the previous visit, the hosts took care to organize a varied program, which included visits to military objectives (the aviation unit from Mihail Kogălniceanu, the Training Center of the chemical troops from Câmpulung Muscel), economic (the aircraft company in Craiova, the shipyard Mangalia, the aeronautical company Ghimbav) and tourist objectives, or, according to the terminology of the time, “cultural-artistic” objectives (the museum of the Delta – Tulcea, the Danube Delta).<sup>32</sup>

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1982 the East German delegation was received again by Nicolae Ceaușescu. In the format of the previous meeting, the minister of National Defence (lieutenant-general Constantin Olteanu), the chief of the general staff (general-colonel Vasile Milea), the deputy minister of the national defence (lieutenant-general Victor Stănculescu) and the deputy secretary of Superior Political Council of the Army and head of the Organizing Directorate (major-general Ilie Ceaușescu, the dictator’s brother) also attended the meeting. Two of those present, generals Milea and Stănculescu, will be at the centre of the events during the Revolution of December 1989.<sup>33</sup>

If the visit from 1972 was limited to only half an hour, according to the verbatim report of the meeting, this time the discussions were wider, a result of the complex international situation, the economic crisis and the issues within the “socialist camp”. In some respects, the positions expressed by Hoffmann and Ceaușescu did not coincide, and strictly military issues were not addressed.

After thanking him for how they were received and showed he was “impressed” by the economic results of the objectives visited and by the “training and education of the young people”, general Hoffmann said that “*the international situation has evolved so that it leads to big issues. I’m not just talking about the tense military situation, but I’m also talking about the economic situation. We are almost given no credit and we have to find our own way out of this situation. Our party has adopted decisions in the field of energy and raw materials saving, in order to achieve greater efficiency in work [...] Of course, all these require efforts and the central problem is the leadership. It takes concrete leadership, appoint wise leadership. The economy can no longer be run with general statements [...] What more can I say about the army? We are obliged to modernize it. And here we have to save. We are committed to reducing fuel consumption by 20%. It is very difficult, because we still have to provide the training*”. Despite the economic problems, Hoffmann was optimistic: “*All the socialist countries have come on a successful path, they have done many incredible things and we are convinced that we will overcome our difficulties. We have a good working class, a good intellectuality, a strong party and we will win*”.<sup>34</sup>

In his speech, after handing the order of “Tudor Vladimirescu” class I to Hoffmann, Nicolae Ceaușescu was “glad that the collaboration between us is developing military wise”. He said that the solutions taken regarding economic deficiencies are a “very good experience”, expressing the hope “*that our comrades also concluded that there is more to be done to achieve a 20% reduction in fuel consumption. Of course, the international economic problems, the economic crisis create a series of difficulties for us too, like all countries*”, Ceaușescu confessed, adding: “*In the past I thought that the economic crisis does not concern the socialist countries, that it is specific only to capitalism. Many have now given up on this concept. There are still many things we need to understand from a different angle. However, there is a political and economic interdependence worldwide and it cannot be ignored*”.<sup>35</sup>

Ceaușescu also addressed the acute political crises at that time in international relations,

suggesting that military solutions were resorted to “too easily”. In his opinion, *“the current strain in international relations is the result of the easiness with which a number of military actions have been applied by both sides, to be correct – by the imperialist countries, but also by the socialist countries [... ] And here we have to understand that in order to provide the policy of relaxation, to avoid new military confrontations, a war, it is required – on both sides – responsibility and prudence in undertaking the various actions”*.

In the run-up to the arms race, the leader from Bucharest was equally blunt: *“although it is difficult for me to speak in front of the military, I am also an activist who has worked in the army and I am also the supreme commander, I have the right to speak more openly. So, however, we must end the arms race. If it continues in the current pace, it will practically – willy-nilly – reach a social and military explosion. After all, today’s economic crisis is directly related to the huge military expenditures”*.<sup>36</sup>

Nicolae Ceaușescu was dissatisfied with the negotiations in Geneva: *“things are not quite right. They discuss issues that concern Europe, with no Europeans”*. The activities of the Warsaw Pact were not to his liking either: *“instead of thinking about how to reduce the strain, we plan to do, in October, a big demonstration of strength in Bulgaria, where the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary must also come and I think even Poland [...] So it is a useless demonstration, which is not about preparing a cooperation in case of defence. In the existing plans it would be nonsense to take the German, Czechoslovak armies to come to the Balkans and to remain uncovered in central Europe. I don’t think there is a supreme commander with no understanding of military issues. So, it is a mere useless demonstration of force, when we make so many statements that we want to stop the arms race, which we want to reach agreements. We have also said that we will still reflect on whether we will participate, whether this character will be maintained”*.<sup>37</sup>

General Hoffmann did not fully agree with the position expressed by Ceaușescu. Stating that *“I do not want to go in the Balkans with the troops. We have enough to do with poten-*

*tial opponents in the West, where there is half of NATO”*, he added: *“comrade secretary general, please forgive me, but dozens of demonstrations are taking place around our countries every year. NATO demonstrates its military policy and unity. And so far, I have looked at this military action in Bulgaria as a demonstration of the unity of the socialist countries and not as a demonstration of force”*. In his reply, Ceaușescu rejected this view, stating that *“a demonstration of the unity of the socialist countries has nothing to do with a military demonstration. It is true that NATO makes a number of applications. So do socialist countries. But NATO does not compel Westerners to take them, for example, to Turkey, but they include forces that are in that area”*.<sup>38</sup>

Another issue addressed during the discussions was Poland. General Hoffmann confessed that *“the Polish comrades are an issue both economically, and thinking wise”*. Ceaușescu said, in his turn, that he understood the problems that emerged as a result of the neighbourhood between the two countries, *“but Poland has created problems for us and for all the socialist countries. The Poles themselves want to maintain military leadership for a long time. It is difficult to conceive how the socialist construction will unfold under such circumstances. It is understandable that without the masses one cannot speak of socialism”*. Hoffmann agreed, adding: *“one cannot govern with weapons endlessly”*. Ceaușescu asked him *“to tell comrade Honecker that we are also concerned about the situation in Poland and we want a political solution in Poland. [...] We understand that there is the activity of foreign imperialist circles, that there is the activity of the Catholic Church, of the Vatican, but where is the activity of the communists. We also carried out the activity under illegal conditions. [...] We know the Poles. We were neighbours with them, just like you. Sure, the Poles have a certain way of being, but they cannot be ignored, one cannot ignore the specificity of the Polish people, the problems that concern them”*.<sup>39</sup>

This last Romanian-East-German meeting with defence ministers from the early ’80s proves that the details of military cooperation took the second place, in the face of obstacles

raised by the economic crisis, the escalation of the arms race and internal problems among socialist countries and which were to worsen by the end of the decade.

Started timidly, then entered into a real “freeze”, the political-economic-military relations between Romania and the German Democratic Republic experienced a certain resurgence in the seven and eight decades of the last century. Paradoxically, the loyalty of both Ceaușescu and Honecker to Marxist dogma ultimately brought the two closer, as the “danger” posed by Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms to the socialist status-quo became, in the view of the leaders in Bucharest and Berlin, increasingly threatening. Thus, the collaboration between Romania and the German Democratic Republic will be accentuated with the beginning of the “glasnost” and “perestroika” processes, Ceaușescu and Honecker creating a conservative alliance that strongly opposed any ideas for modifying the socialist paradigm, but which manifested mainly politically, not militarily.

The details regarding the military cooperation between the two countries in the period 1955-1989 will come to the attention of the researchers as the documents from the Romanian military archives, currently subject to legislative restrictions, become accessible.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Petre Otu, *Relații politico-militare româno-est-germane în perioada 1965-1975*, în *Revista de istorie militară* nr. 1-2/2008, p. 19. (*Romanian East-German political-military relations in the period 1965-1975*, in the *Military history magazine* no 1-2/2008, p. 19.).

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Deletant, *România sub regimul comunist*, ediția a II-a revăzută, editor Romulus Rusan, în românește de Delia Răzdulescu, Fundația Academia Civică, București, 2006, p. 153. (*Romania under the communist regime*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition revised, editor Romulus Rusan, translated into Romanian by Delia Răzdulescu, Civic Academy Foundation, Bucharest, 2006, p. 153.).

<sup>3</sup> Among the works dedicated to Romanian “dis-sidence” within the soviet bloc, we mention: Stelian Tănase, *Elite și societate. Guvernarea Gheorghiu-Dej* (Elites and society. Gheorghiu-Dej government) 1948-1965, Bucharest, 1998; Mihai Retegan,

1968. *Din primăvară până-n toamnă* (From spring to autumn), Bucharest, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 20; general colonel (r) dr. Constantin Olteanu, colonel (r) dr. Alesandru Duțu, general maior (r) Constantin Antip, *România și Tratatul de la Varșovia. Istoric. Mărturii. Documente. Cronologie (Romania and the Warsaw Treaty. History. Testimonies. Documents. Chronology)*, Bucharest, Editura Pro Historia, 2005, p. 41-48.

<sup>5</sup> *Central Historical National Archives*, Central Comitee of the Romanian Communist Party fund (hereinafter A.N.I.C., C.C. fund of P.C.R.), Chancellery, file 59/1970, pp. 5-27.

<sup>6</sup> Petre Otu, *Dispute privind crearea Comisiei de Politică Externă a Tratatului de la Varșovia*, în “*Revista de istorie militară*”, (*Disputes on the creation of the Foreign Policy Commission of the Warsaw Treaty*, in “*Review of Military History*”) no 5-6/2002, p. 43-47.

<sup>7</sup> A.N.I.C. C.C. fund of P.C.R., Foreign Relations Section, file no 5/1965, p. 125.

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the establishment of the Romanian-West-German diplomatic relations according to Dumitru Preda (coordinator), *România – Republica Federală Germania, vol. I, Începutul relațiilor diplomatice 1966-1967*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2009 (*Romania – German Federal Republic, vol. I, Start of the diplomatic relations 1966-1967*, Encyclopaedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> A.N.I.C., fund of the Committee for Press and Prints, file no 30/1967, pp. 63-65, 153.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>11</sup> A.N.I.C., C.C. fund of P.C.R., file no 13/1967, f. 4-6.

<sup>12</sup> Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Larry L. Watts, *Ferește-mă, doamne, de prieteni... Războiul clandestin al Blocului Sovietic cu România*, Editura Rao, București, 2011, pp. 296-297 (*May God defend me from my friends... The clandestine war of the Soviet Bloc with Romania*, Publishing House Rao, Bucharest, 2011, pp. 296-297).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 297.

<sup>15</sup> Lavinia Betea, *Convorbiri neterminate. Corneliu Mănescu în dialog cu Lavinia Betea*, Editura Polirom, București, 2001, p. 163. (*Unfinished talks. Corneliu Mănescu in dialogue with Lavinia Betea*, Publishing House Polirom, Bucharest, 2001, p. 163.)

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 161.

<sup>17</sup> Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> This fact fed the speculations according to which the two countries, seconded by Yugoslavia, wanted to set up the Small Entente, a defensive re-

gional organization that was active in the period 1921-1939. Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>19</sup> Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> Romanian National Military Archives (hereinafter A.M.N.R.), *Microfilme* fund, roll II 3. 353, cd. 5 and subs.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> Petre Otu, *op. cit.*, p. 23; A.N.I.C., C.C. fund of P.C.R., Chancellery, file no 123/1970, f. 52-53.

<sup>23</sup> A.N.M.R., *Microfilme* fund, roll II3.375, cd. 11.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, cd. 16-18.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, cd. 19 and subs.

<sup>26</sup> A.N.I.C., C.C. fund of P.C.R., section Foreign Relations, file no 29/1972, f.2.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 3-4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 15-17.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 16-17.

<sup>31</sup> A.N.I.C., C.C. fund of P.C.R., section Foreign Relations, file no 69/1982, f. 18.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 15.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 3

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 5.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 6-7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 9-10

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 10-11.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 11-13.



Walter Ulbricht and the Romanian officials sign the common declaration and the Romania-GDR agreement, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1950. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, GA086

The official visit of the leaders from Bucharest in GDR, April 24<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 1957. In the middle, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the general secretary of the Romanian Labour Party. The last one on the left, Nicolae Ceausescu. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, E202



I.G. Maurer, President of the Council of Ministers, together with Kurt Schmücker (left), Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1966. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, A362





The official visit of the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Corneliu Mănescu (centre), to the Federal Republic of Germany, January 30<sup>th</sup> – February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1967. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, CA049



Honecker – Ceaușescu meeting, Bucharest, February 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 1967. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, LA397

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**PROIECT de PROGRAM**  
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privind vizita delegației militare a Republicii Democratice Germane,  
condusă de ministrul Apărării Naționale - tovarășul general de  
armată Heinz Hoffmann

**ZIUA I - LUNI 17 APRILIE 1972**

- 10.30 - Sosirea delegației la Aeroportul internațional Otopeni.
- 10.30 - 10.45 - Ceremonialul primirii la aeroport.
- 10.45 - 12.15 - Deplasarea și instalarea la Casa de oaspeți.
- 12.15 - 12.30 - Deplasarea la Ministerul Forțelor Armate.
- 12.30 - 14.00 - Vizită protocolară la ministrul Forțelor Armate și convorbiri.
- 14.00 - 14.45 - Depunerea unor coroane de flori.
- 14.45 - 16.45 - Dejun și timp la dispoziție.
- 16.45 - 17.00 - Deplasarea la Primăria municipiului București.
- 17.00 - 18.00 - Vizită protocolară la primarul municipiului București.
- 18.00 - 18.15 - Deplasarea la reședință.
- 19.30 - 21.30 - Recepție oferită de ministrul Forțelor Armate în onoarea delegației.

**ZIUA a II-a - MARTI 18 APRILIE 1972**

- 07.30 - Micul dejun.
- 08.00 - 09.00 - Deplasarea la Ploiești.
- 09.00 - 10.30 - Vizitarea Centrului de instrucție al artileriei.
- 10.30 - 12.00 - Deplasarea la Cheile Postăvarului.
- 12.00 - 14.00 - Prezentarea unor exerciții de către o unitate de vânători de munte și a unor materiale din dotare.
- 14.00 - 15.00 - Deplasarea la Brașov și instalarea la Casa armatei.
- 15.00 - 16.45 - Dejun și timp la dispoziție.
- 16.45 - 17.00 - Deplasarea la Școala de ofițeri activi de artilerie antiseriană și radiolocație.

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The front page of the draft program on the visit of the East German military delegation,  
April 1972. The Romanian National Military Archives

# DER VORSITZENDE DES STAATSRATES

DER DEUTSCHEN DEMOKRATISCHEN REPUBLIK

Berlin, den 18. Januar 1973

An den  
Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates  
der Sozialistischen Republik Rumänien  
Genossen Nicolae C e a u s e s c u

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Werter Genosse Ceausescu!

Ich wende mich mit der Bitte an Sie, mir und meiner Gattin ab 21. April 1973 für die Dauer von etwa 6 Wochen einen Kur-aufenthalt im Sanatorium von Frau Prof. Dr. A B l a n zu ermöglichen. In meiner Begleitung werden sich notwendigerweise ein Arzt und ein Pfleger befinden. Ich habe in Berlin schon mehrmals eine Ablan-Kur durchgeführt, so daß also bereits erwiesen ist, daß mir diese Kur gut bekommt.

Der mich begleitende Arzt müßte die Therapie (Herz/Blut-hochdruck) fortsetzen, die ich jetzt einige Jahre durchführe. Die Verständigung zwischen den Ärzten im Sanatorium und dem mich begleitenden Arzt wird nicht schwer sein.

Was die Speisen betrifft, so kommt Diät infrage, wie sie üblich ist bei Patienten, denen die Gallenblase operiert wurde.

Es wäre wünschenswert, wenn ich und meine Frau je ein Schlafzimmer und ein gemeinsames Wohnzimmer zur Verfügung hätten.

Wenn von Frau Prof. Ablan die Genehmigung zum Kuraufenthalt vorliegt, würde ich veranlassen, daß mein Arzt nach Bukarest kommt, um Einzelheiten zu besprechen.

Die Leitung des Sanatoriums möge mir die Kosten für mich und meine Frau sowie die Kosten für Arzt und Pfleger für die gleiche Zeit sowie die sonstigen Unkosten mitteilen.

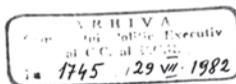
Besten Dank für Ihre Bemühungen.

Mit sozialistischem Gruß

  
/W. Ulbricht/

Walter Ulbricht's letter to Nicolae Ceaușescu requesting permission for a treatment at the Ana Aslan Institute, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1973. The National Central Historian Archives

The visit of Helmuth Schmidt, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, to Bucharest. Official photo from the solemnity of signing the common declaration, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1978. The online photo gallery of the Romanian communism, BA245



#### STENOGRAMA

convorbirii tovarăşului Nicolae Ceauşescu cu delegaţia militară a R.D.G., condusă de general de armată Heinz Hoffmann, membru al Biroului Politic al C.C. al P.S.U.G., ministrul apărării naţionale al R.D.Germene.

- 28 mai 1982 -

Au participat tovarăşii Ion Coman, membru al Comitetului Politic Executiv, secretar al C.C. al P.C.R., general locotenent Constantin Olteanu, membru supleant al Comitetului Politic Executiv al C.C. al P.C.R., ministrul apărării naţionale, general colonel Vasile Milea, prim adjunct al ministrului apărării naţionale şi şef al Marelui Stat Major, general lt. Victor Stănculescu, adjunct al ministrului apărării naţionale, general maior Ilie Ceauşescu, secretar adjunct al Consiliului Politic Superior al Armatei şi şef al Direcţiei Organizatorice.

A fost de faţă ambasadorul R.D.G. la Bucureşti.

Heinz Hoffmann:

Tovarăşe Secretar General, am avut o vreme minunată în România.

Tov.Nicolae Ceauşescu:

Sper că v-aţi simţit bine.

./.

The first page of the transcript of Nicolae Ceausescu's meeting with the East German military delegation led by General Heinz Hoffmann, May 28th, 1982. The National Central Historian Archives

# BETWEEN ALLIANCE OBLIGATIONS AND NATIONAL INTERESTS: EAST GERMANY, ROMANIA AND THE EXERCISE “BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS ’70”

CHRISTOPH NÜBEL, PhD

In the autumn of 1970, East Germany hosted a large-scale manoeuvre of the Warsaw Pact with a total of 72,000 military personnel participating. “*Brotherhood in Arms ’70*” was part of a series of manoeuvres of the Warsaw Pact uniting all seven allied armed forces for the first time. During the manoeuvre, which took place between 12 and 18 October 1970, the newspaper *Brotherhood in Arms* informed the military personnel about what was happening in the manoeuvre and the harmonious interaction of the allied armed forces. In the imprint, *Brotherhood in Arms* indicated that it was a joint product of seven military newspapers of the allies, including the East German “*Volksarmee*” (National People’s Army) and the Romanian “*Apărarea Patriei*”. The newspaper emphasised the international character of the events by being published in all national languages of the participating armed forces, including 300 copies in the Romanian language. The third issue reported on a talk with the Romanian Lieutenant Colonel Victor Lăcătușu. He told the newspaper that he had been eager to participate in the manoeuvre and emphasised the “great benefit [...] of cooperating with comrades from the fraternal armies”. According to the paper, the talk with Lăcătușu had taken place “at the headquarters of the Romanian manoeuvre troops”.<sup>1</sup> Although obfuscating, this statement was not false: except for a staff element (of 224 personnel), Romania had not sent any troops. With reports of this kind, the newspaper claimed an extensive Romanian military presence that did not in fact exist. Astute observers might have realised this: the numerous pictures in the manoeuvre

newspaper showed all kinds of major equipment of the allies, but none from Romania. Indeed, the 57 automobiles the Romanians brought along did not add much to the martial impression of the manoeuvre usually conveyed by the newspaper.<sup>2</sup>

This example shows that Romania evidently played a special role within the Eastern alliance. It participated in the military activities of the Warsaw Pact, albeit with considerable restraint. At the same time, the huge efforts the German Democratic Republic (GDR) put into *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* made it clear that here the manoeuvre was considered as proof that – from a military-political point of view – the GDR was now grown up. 25 years after the end of World War II and on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of its foundation, the East German state wanted to present itself as a full member of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>3</sup> The choice of the manoeuvre’s name was by no means arbitrary: “*Brotherhood in Arms*” was understood as the international defence community of the socialist states, which was aligned in terms of ideology, organisation and command and control. Not only was it expressed in the intended military political coherence of the Warsaw Pact, but it was also to become manifest in personal meetings among the military personnel.<sup>4</sup> “*Brotherhood in Arms*” thus described the core principle of the Eastern alliance.

This paper examines the *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* manoeuvre as an example for gauging the political role and importance of East Germany and Romania within the Eastern alliance. *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* is particularly suited as a subject of research since the exercise took

place in a minor saddle period of the East-West conflict. The tensions of the heyday of the Cold War were still palpable around 1962. Nevertheless, the treaties concluded between the East and the West and the new balancing rhetoric of the alliances expressed in the Harmel Report of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1967 and the Budapest Appeal of the Warsaw Pact of 1969 heralded a phase of détente policy. At the same time, Romania had reached an impasse with its policy of sovereignty, which it had been pursuing since the late 1950s. Not wanting to leave the course of national independence, it needed to make political and military concessions in order to avoid alienation from the Soviet Union. It had already fallen out with East Berlin by establishing diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1967 without prior consultation.

The period around 1970 was therefore an era of ambivalence both within the alliance systems but also in a cross-bloc context. It can be analysed using the *Brotherhood in Arms '70* manoeuvre as an example. Large-scale exercises did not serve merely military purposes, they also had a political dimension. *Brotherhood in Arms '70* can be understood as an event where the Eastern alliance, constituted by abstract treaties and widely scattered armed forces of individual states, could manifest itself in symbolically charged and partially ritualised actions. The numerous rallies and meetings, extensive coverage but also the combat actions demonstrated to the soldiers, the audience and the public in West and East that the alliance did exist and was capable of joint action.

Contacts between East Germany and Romania in the environment of the *Brotherhood in Arms* manoeuvre can be viewed from the *histoire croisée*\* approach, which focuses on the military as an “entangled system”. The military self and public images or routines did not

evolve in a hermetically sealed space but rather in the context of interaction with the outside.<sup>5</sup> In line with this, *Brotherhood in Arms '70* can be used as an example for measuring the international character of the Warsaw Pact and the significance of the allied states. During the manoeuvre, the East German and the Romanian armies presented themselves to their allies and the public in a way which corresponded to their self-image and the assumed expectations of others.

From this starting point, the paper will take up two recent research trends: the first emphasises that the Cold War was a “simulated war” or “imaginary war”.<sup>6</sup> It did not take place on the battlefield – at least not in Europe – but in the mindsets of the contemporaries and became manifest in feelings of threat but also in organisational preparations for a war.<sup>7</sup> Numerous works emphasise how much the East-West conflict influenced not only politics but all aspects of life.<sup>8</sup> In the process, however, the military core of the East-West conflict falls from view.<sup>9</sup> By conceptualising manoeuvres as a performance of symbolic acts in a military context and thus focusing on military issues, this paper draws on the research on imaginary war. Its first argument is that *Brotherhood in Arms '70* was too important for the political decision-makers in the Soviet Union and East Germany to allow Romania to stay away. They applied extensive military diplomacy to induce Romania to participate. The small military contribution finally made by Romania was greatly overstated in the coverage of the event in order to emphasise the unity of the Warsaw Pact and present *Brotherhood in Arms '70* as a success.

The second trend questions the bipolarity of the East-West conflict and points out the limits of the Cold War. Instead, it emphasises cross-bloc exchange and contacts. The Hungarian historian György Péteri refers to the

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\* The *Histoire croisée* (interconnected history) was developed by Bénédicte Zimmermann and Michael Werner (at the EHESS in Paris). It is an approach to the multi-perspective historiography of transnational history inspired by the French social sciences and based on the criticism of comparative and transfer-oriented approaches. For these reproduced an a priori cut of their objects of investigation. This creates conflicts with the comparative directions of transnational historiography. The aim is – as with all forms of global history or other multiperspectival historical concepts – to overcome the limitation of perspective on the nation state (as in national history).

permeability of the border or “Iron Curtain,” as it was dubbed by contemporaries, and describes it as resembling rather a “Nylon Curtain.”<sup>10</sup> In this way, medium and small states also come into view whose positioning in international relations had also been determined by national interests reaching back even to pre-war constellations. Although remaining an important framework, the East-West conflict is no longer regarded as the only determinant of international relations.

Admittedly, there is no question that from a military perspective the Soviet Union was of “outstanding importance” to the alliance.<sup>11</sup> The Soviet general staff coordinated the war planning of the alliance. The crucial leadership positions in the Unified Command were occupied by Soviet officers. For these reasons, the Warsaw Pact was correctly referred to as “a mere extended arm of the Soviet general staff.”<sup>12</sup> Having said that, the Soviet Union was not able to immediately enforce its interests. Rather, it had, legally and symbolically, provided the political level of the alliance as represented by meetings of the party leaders and the ministers of foreign affairs and defence, with a structure that even emphasised the sovereignty of the participating states and gave them leeway to pursue their own interests. The political bodies of the Warsaw Pact regularly saw tug of war contests for decisions where the Soviet Union was by no means always able to prevail, but depended on bilateral negotiations and compromises.<sup>13</sup>

Based on these findings, the second argument is that *Brotherhood in Arms '70* was a success for both East Germany and Romania. The GDR registered the participation of all seven alliance members and presented itself as a fully-fledged military power within the Warsaw Pact, an alliance designed to defend its own security against the West, which was deemed precarious. Romania, on the other hand, was able to maintain its course of making only a minimal contribution to the Warsaw Pact. To prove this will require at first outlining the international situation of East Germany and Romania around 1970, followed by analysing the importance of *Brotherhood in Arms '70* and the political negotiation processes within the Eastern alliance in the context of this event.

Eventually, the paper will examine the role of the Romanian armed forces during the manoeuvre in order to measure the ambivalences of the “brotherhood in arms” in situ.

### **1. East Germany and Romania within the Warsaw Pact**

The intergovernmental relations between East Germany and Romania in the late 1960s were fraught with considerable tension because their foreign and alliance political positions diverged considerably. East Germany itself had become the “prime vassal” of the Soviet Union within the Warsaw Pact.<sup>14</sup> It supported Moscow’s positions and only rarely pursued its own agenda. East Berlin had only very little room for manoeuvre, which was defined by its dependence on the Soviet Union, intra-German competition and domestic issues.<sup>15</sup> The already much restricted foreign policy leeway of East Germany was further limited by the historical burden of the expansionary war policy of the Nazi regime. Therefore, any East German solo action and initiatives were always viewed with suspicion within the socialist bloc. At the same time, East Germany was of special importance within Soviet military plans due to its geopolitical situation. In the event of war in Central Europe, it would have become the central staging area and theatre of operations of the Eastern alliance. Accordingly, East Germany was deeply integrated into the Warsaw Pact. Its National People’s Army (NVA) had been set up under Soviet aegis and had grown into a combat-capable force in the 1960s.

The policy of East Germany was largely determined by the existence of two German states belonging to different blocs. The FRG and the GDR were correlated in their distinction and competition. For a long time, however, the West German state had been internationally successful with its policy of delegitimising East Germany, claiming to represent the whole of Germany. With its Hallstein Doctrine it prevented the establishment of diplomatic relations between third states and the GDR. Hence, the socialist alliance became more important. Its foreign policy was unquestionably characterised by its efforts to be recognised as a sovereign state and to drive back the influence of the Federal Republic.

Romania pursued a completely different political course. For contemporary observers it seemed on its “way to emancipation.”<sup>16</sup> As early as the late 1950s, after a phase of close connection with the Soviet Union, Romania began to pursue a policy of autonomy without completely departing from the traditional socialist alliance system. The reasons for this were manifold. In economic terms, the plans initiated by Nikita S. Khrushchev in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) in 1961 threatened the industrialisation policy of Bucharest. According to the Comecon, Romania was to be primarily a raw material supplier in the Eastern economic zone, whereas the leadership of the Partidul Comunist Român (Romanian Communist Party, RCP) of state leader Gheorghiu-Dej pursued an ambitious industrialisation programme and feared serious economic problems in the wake of the Comecon initiative. Furthermore, Gheorghiu-Dej realised that an anti-Soviet orientation would increase the political prestige of the regime within the country. Many Romanians supported a national policy which found its expression in the abolition of Russian as a compulsory school subject or the renaming of streets.<sup>17</sup> Besides, with this party leader, there was scepticism towards the anti-Stalinist policy of Khrushchev.<sup>18</sup> And finally, Romania had serious “security concerns” because the Berlin and the Cuban crises had shown that the policy of the great powers could result in a war in which Romania did not want to get involved.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, Romania advocated a policy of disarmament and détente.<sup>20</sup> China’s alienation from the USSR was the backdrop for Romania’s striving for autonomy, as it demonstrated that socialist states did not necessarily need to act in concert. It helped to legitimise Bucharest’s efforts to become more independent from the Soviet Union.

After the death of Gheorghiu-Dej in 1965, Nicolae Ceauşescu continued the policy of autonomy as secretary general of the RCP.<sup>21</sup> During the late 1960s, remarkable events confirmed Romania’s special status within the Eastern alliance. They had an impact on its position within the Warsaw Pact and even on the *Brotherhood in Arms* ’70 manoeuvre. Initially, Ceauşescu intensified contacts with Western states: the presidents of France and the United

States, Charles de Gaulle and Richard Nixon, even visited Romania. The reason for this was that the ambitious industrialisation policy required Western support. In 1967, Romania was the first country within the socialist alliance to establish political relations with the Federal Republic, which constituted an affront to the GDR. Over the course of subsequent years, relations between these two countries had hit rock bottom. Romania, which East Germany considered to be only third rate among the socialist states, had positioned itself against core interests of the GDR and even deliberately left its leadership in the dark about the course of the negotiations with the West Germany.<sup>22</sup> This resulted in the Ulbricht Doctrine, named after the East German state leader Walter Ulbricht, in opposition to the Hallstein Doctrine, being enforced within the Eastern alliance with the help of the Soviet Union. It stipulated that the other socialist states should not establish diplomatic relations with West Germany until Bonn recognised the GDR. This stance was also taken into account during the talks on bilateral treaties on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance with Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, which East Germany had been conducting at the time. In this regard East Germany had thus been triumphant. The last remaining treaty with Romania was concluded only in 1972, five years after the beginning of negotiations.<sup>23</sup>

While Romania had rushed ahead in 1967, after consultations within the alliance and shortly before the manoeuvre started, the Soviet Union concluded the Moscow Treaty with the Federal Republic on 12 August 1970. The Treaty emphasised the status quo in Europe and committed the parties to the Treaty to renounce the use of force. The conferences of the Warsaw Pact in Prague (30-31 October 1969) and Moscow (3-4 December 1969) indeed saw a dispute on the policy of détente, during which the different interests of the alliance members came to the surface. The talks between Bonn and Moscow were considered a danger from the Polish perspective because the border issue might be discussed to the disadvantage of Warsaw. East Berlin was afraid that the Soviet course of conciliation with the Federal Republic could considerably weaken the Eastern front against West Germany and

might put the GDR further behind on the international scene.<sup>24</sup> After the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty, Erich Honecker, the secretary of the East German National Defence Council, complained that despite the rapprochement between West Germany and the USSR, the GDR was still awaiting full international recognition.<sup>25</sup> The negotiations with Bonn revealed that even within the Eastern alliance the GDR held a weak position and was unable to sufficiently implement its political ideas. From the perspective of East Berlin, it became increasingly necessary to strengthen the military cooperation with the Soviet Union to be protected from the West at least in this respect.<sup>26</sup> By contrast, it is hardly surprising that Ceaușescu approved of the Treaty at the Moscow Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact on 20 August 1970 and welcomed the fact that the Treaty finally brought about a normalisation of relations with the capitalist states of the West.<sup>27</sup>

Another significant turning point in the relations of the socialist alliance was the Czechoslovakia Crisis of 1968. A few days before the Soviet invasion, Ceaușescu had visited Prague and voiced his appreciation for the liberalisation policy of party leader Alexander Dubček, although he did not really share its objectives.<sup>28</sup> The violent end of the attempt to establish a more liberal socialism in the Eastern bloc made it clear that the Soviet Union was not willing to accept any state breaking ranks with the alliance. It is debatable whether the Soviet leadership surrounding party leader Leonid Brezhnev was actually planning to invade Romania.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, the fear of a Soviet invasion became a determining feature of Ceaușescu's policy and found its expression, for instance, in the establishment of the "Patriotic guards", a militia entrusted with territorial defence tasks.<sup>30</sup>

As a result, Romania's restraint within the alliance increased. In view of the Soviet plans pursued since the mid-1960s to expand the structures of the Warsaw Pact and further consolidate the alliance politically and militarily under Soviet dominance, Bucharest had already been sceptical.<sup>31</sup> During a talk on the margins of the October Storm manoeuvre in 1965, Romanian Minister of Defence Leontin

Sălăjan fiercely criticised Soviet reform plans: In the opinion of Romania, the Unified Command should not be a command authority but rather a cooperation body with the chair rotating periodically between the member states. He demanded that military measures be ordered only with the approval of the governments concerned. In the presence of the Soviet representative of the Unified Command, Sălăjan insisted on the Romanian position: "This is not against the [Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Pact] Marshal Grechko, this is not against the Soviet Union, this is about the socialist principle of cooperation"<sup>32</sup> After the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Romania saw its reservations against a centralist Moscow-led Warsaw Pact confirmed. Under no circumstances did they want to risk sharing the fate of Czechoslovakia on account of their policy of autonomy. In the opinion of the Bucharest leadership, a continuation of the policy of obstruction towards the Soviet Union made an invasion more probable. Thus, they wanted to strike a balance between autonomy and integration: with regard to the reform of the Warsaw Pact, they began to pursue a more conciliatory course, whereas on military issues they remained adamant.

The political positions of East Germany and Romania diverged considerably at times. In 1967, the establishment of diplomatic contacts between the FRG and Romania caused a severe crisis in bilateral relations. It also had an impact on military issues. As a result, the conclusion of the mutual assistance treaty between the two countries was delayed until 1972. Admittedly, military relations between East Berlin and Bucharest were generally "distinctly less close" than between other alliance members.<sup>33</sup> While East Germany had concluded for example 45 bilateral treaties on cooperation in military matters with Hungary, there were only 26 such treaties with Romania.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, military contacts between the two states were never abandoned completely.

## 2. Political dimensions of *Brotherhood in Arms* '70

In military affairs, the year 1970 marked the coming of age of East Germany. It had

been tasked by the Warsaw Pact with holding a large-scale military manoeuvre on its territory in 1970. Although the key instructions came from Moscow,<sup>35</sup> the Minister for National Defence, Heinz Hoffmann, was formally “commanding” the manoeuvre: thus East Berlin and the Ministry for National Defence in Strausberg bore the responsibility.<sup>36</sup> The NVA and the territorial and civil defence forces were now able to demonstrate their combat efficiency and prove East Germany was an important ally. The Ministry referred to *Brotherhood in Arms '70* as a “highlight in the education and training of the military personnel as well as an important test for the combat power and combat readiness of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact.”<sup>37</sup>

The Politburo of the East German Socialist Party, which defined the political and ideological framework of the manoeuvre, emphasised the importance of the manoeuvre in April 1970: “For the first time since the existence of the Warsaw Treaty”, Bulgarian, East German, Polish, Czechoslovakian and Hungarian armed forces as well as the Soviet Army “jointly participated” in a manoeuvre. Since Romania had not yet confirmed its participation it could not be included in the planning. The name *Brotherhood in Arms '70*, which had been determined by April 1970, turned the chance of joining together, for the first time ever, all alliance armies for an exercise into an obligation, as it underlined the outstanding symbolic dimension of the exercise. It was not only designed to demonstrate the “combat readiness”, “mastery of modern weapons systems” and superior “socialist command of armed forces” but also, at the ideological level, to emphasise “friendship and brotherhood in arms” in the alliance. These intentions were summarised in the motto of the manoeuvre, which was distributed on banners and posters throughout the exercise areas in October 1970: “Brothers in class – brothers in arms – united invincible! Leave the enemy no chance!”<sup>38</sup>

Many speeches and brochures emphasised that the manoeuvre took place in the “year of the 100th anniversary of V. I. Lenin and the 150th anniversary of Friedrich Engels”. Both had stressed the significance of the military in their writings, and Lenin had even referred

to the arming of the people as *conditio sine qua non* of socialist regimes. With this reference, the organisers hoped to be able to put the “Marxist-Leninist theory of the defence of the fatherland” into practice.<sup>39</sup> The year 1970, however, marked some more anniversaries. In an article for the *Neues Deutschland* party newspaper published shortly before the onset of the manoeuvre, Minister of Defence Hoffmann highlighted the fifteenth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact. Within this time, it had grown into a combat-capable alliance and a “real guardian and defender of the vital interests of the peoples of Europe and the whole of peace-loving mankind.” In the twenty-first year of its existence, the GDR should demonstrate that it was “able to successfully participate in combined military action of the coalition at an ever increasing level.”<sup>40</sup>

In view of this symbolic meaning, it was very important both for the Soviet Union and for East Germany to induce all alliance members to participate. In previous years, Romania had already proved to be a difficult partner in this regard. Romania rejected exercises on its territory because it was afraid that the armed force marshalled for the manoeuvre could be used to bring about a surprise invasion and regime change. It insisted that the conduct of manoeuvres required bilateral agreements to ensure legal certainty: a novelty within the Warsaw Pact.<sup>41</sup> This demand met with vehement objections from the Soviets. It can be understood as a justification strategy to avert the danger of military force being used against the Bucharest party leadership, with the help of a legalistic argument. After 1968, Romania was only ready to hold staff exercises on its territory at most. Bucharest also largely withdrew from exercises outside its own state borders.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, the Romanian party leadership refused to place its armed forces under a foreign command.<sup>43</sup> It was by no means clear to what extent Romania wanted to participate in the numerous manoeuvre activities of the Warsaw Pact in the future. The fact that the Eastern propaganda concept of brotherhood in arms became the namesake of the manoeuvre might have increased reservations.

There was much at stake for Moscow on the manoeuvre issue: it was important not

only in terms of enforcing its political and military primacy in the Warsaw Pact but also with regard to demonstrating the integrity of the alliance both internally and externally. This was instrumental to being able to coordinate the incipient policy of détente and establishing a good position for negotiations with the West by standing united. For this reason, several Soviet-Romanian meetings took place in 1969-70. In September 1969, the deputy of the Romanian minister of defence, General Ion Gheorghe, met with the chief of staff of the Unified Armed Forces, General Sergey M. Shtemenko in Moscow. Gheorghe again emphasised the necessity of bilateral agreements to regulate the modalities of manoeuvres and made it known that there would be no further military exercises in Romania and that in 1970 there would only be a staff exercise. Shtemenko, on the other hand, pointed out the problems arising from this attitude. Other members of the alliance might criticise the apparently privileged position of Romania within the alliance. This remark allows for the conclusion that, evidently, not all states welcomed the costly manoeuvres on their territories. In Shtemenko's opinion, another argument carried more weight. Romania's special path in manoeuvre issues could give rise to public speculations about serious differences within the Warsaw Pact. Gheorghe concluded from this statement that the participation of Romania was obviously a question of prestige both within the alliance and externally.<sup>44</sup>

The Soviet concerns were not unfounded because information about Romanian obstructions within the socialist bloc also reached the West. This concerned foreign policy and economic issues but also the issue of Romanian participation in military exercises. The United States secret service had information about the dissenting position of Romania on this issue.<sup>45</sup> The East German Ministry of State Security (MfS) was aware that a speech by the Polish Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz was discussed in NATO bodies. Cyrankiewicz castigated the Romanian non-compliant attitude regarding manoeuvres as "problematic and hardly clever" and stressed that the socialist states were "determined" to "break" this position.<sup>46</sup> Even the Western press reported about internal quarrels of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>47</sup>

In 1970, the Soviet Union took a more hardline approach. The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) even noted that there was a real "war of nerves being waged against Bucharest by Moscow". Observers assumed that the intensified manoeuvre activities of Soviet and allied troops were also a message to Romania, given the remarkably extensive coverage by Radio Moscow in the Romanian language.<sup>48</sup> The Soviet leadership demanded in particular that Romania give in regarding the manoeuvre issue. During a meeting of Ceauşescu with the Soviet Communist Party leadership in Moscow on 18/19 May 1970, Brezhnev accused Romania of pursuing an ambiguous policy: while Romania ostensibly agreed with all decisions, it did not implement them. The Arab states had just suffered a defeat against Israel because they had not conducted any exercises. In the end, Brezhnev hinted, Romania weakened the Warsaw Pact. If it wanted to leave the alliance, it should state so openly.<sup>49</sup>

Given the importance the Soviets attached to the Warsaw Pact, this was not to be understood as an invitation to leave but rather as a threat. The Bucharest leadership knew that they had to strike a balance which on the one hand allowed Romania to enforce their interests and on the other hand offered enough concessions to the USSR in the socialist alliance. The Romanian Prime Minister Ion Gheorghe Maurer had obviously spoken with the US Ambassador in Bucharest Leonard C. Meeker to that effect. Romania could not completely refuse Warsaw Pact manoeuvres on its territory because this "would cause too much uproar". The MfS, which had collected information on this meeting, concluded that "Romania had to play a more active role in the military activities of the Warsaw Pact, even if it does not want to."<sup>50</sup> The pressure on Romania had obviously become too much, so it had to give up its rigid attitude. The West German *Spiegel* magazine conjectured that Romania was hardly in a position "to skirt its Pact obligations any longer."<sup>51</sup> The MfS supposed that a participation in manoeuvres outside its national borders might be "an alternative which Romania could accept without denying its stance on the sovereignty of the individual bloc states."<sup>52</sup>

In the run-up to the *Brotherhood in Arms* '70 manoeuvre, the Soviet Union did indeed

make every effort to ensure the participation of Romanian troops. In early March 1970, a meeting took place between a group around the Romanian Minister of Defence Ion Ioniță as well as the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces Ivan I. Yakubovsky and Shtemenko in Moscow which once again focused on the manoeuvre issue. The Romanian delegation was severely upbraided: the Romanian demand for bilateral agreements was unnecessary because the statute of the Warsaw Pact as approved in 1969 allowed for such manoeuvres. Articles 10, 11 and 25 indeed offered far-reaching means to the Unified Command. For instance, the Supreme Commander was authorised to take measures to increase the combat capability of the allied armed forces.<sup>53</sup> The Soviet generals expressly admonished the Romanians for not having processed documents of the Warsaw Pact, including the important Protocol on the further development of the armed forces until 1975. They criticised further that the Romanians had stayed away from the manoeuvre in Hungary in 1969 and wanted to evade the large-scale manoeuvre in East Germany in 1970.<sup>54</sup>

It is not clear when exactly the Romanian leadership decided to send troops to East Germany in response to the pressure from Moscow. The paper endorsing the East German plans on *Brotherhood in Arms '70*, which Yakubovsky returned to the East German Ministry for National Defence with slight modifications in late 1969, does not mention the Romanian armed forces.<sup>55</sup> Even as late as September 1970, i.e. one month before the beginning of the manoeuvre, the participation of Romania was still not confirmed. It appears that even during the visit of a high-ranking Romanian military delegation headed by Minister of Defence Ioniță to East Germany between 3 and 10 September no final agreement was reached. East Germany had issued the invitation in April.<sup>56</sup> It is not clear whether it was connected with the intention to get the Romanians to participate in the manoeuvre since mutual visits at that level were not uncommon among the allies. It is also possible that they wanted to give a fresh impetus to the faltering negotiations on the bilateral treaty of friendship.

Nevertheless, it was of particular importance to Minister Hoffmann to emphasise the

significance of the Warsaw Pact during this visit. During the farewell ceremony for the Romanian delegation, he stressed the “unanimity” within the Eastern alliance – words that were directed at the supreme power of the USSR and intended to underline that the GDR stood firmly at the side of the former. On the other hand, it is also possible that this was an appeal to the visitors from Romania to take a more conciliatory stance within the alliance. Hoffmann had added a handwritten toast to his speech manuscript to raise a toast to “the strengthening of the unity and coherence of our socialist defence alliance – the Warsaw Treaty”.<sup>57</sup> The Romanians, however, were not convinced by these warm words, so that Moscow again intervened from the alliance level. On 12 September 1970, Shtemenko endorsed the invitation letters to *Brotherhood in Arms '70* sent by Hoffmann to the defence ministers of the Warsaw Pact. In an addendum, he specifically asked to “once more” invite Minister of Defence Ioniță. It read: “The staffs and troops of the armed forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania will be included in the plan of the manoeuvre after we have received your consent.”<sup>58</sup>

### **3. *Brotherhood in Arms '70*: Romanian troops in East Germany**

Eventually, Romania agreed to participate in the manoeuvre. Like the general Romanian stance in the Eastern alliance, Romanian commitment to *Brotherhood in Arms '70* was based on compromise. Although unable to avoid the exercise, they could send only small units. In the end, Bucharest dispatched the reduced staff element of an armoured division with a total of 224 personnel. This was only 0.3 per cent of the manoeuvre troops, of which East Germany provided about 60 per cent and the USSR 17 per cent.<sup>59</sup> During the whole course of the manoeuvre, it was obvious that the relationship between Romania and the other alliance members was marked by ambivalences.

It already began with the entry of the allied armed forces into East Germany. Festive committees had lined up at the border crossing points to welcome the troops. Although Romania had expressly denied such a ceremony,

the Romanian troops came across a festive committee of party officials and the population at the German-Czechoslovakian border at Zinnwald. The surprised Romanian commander, a colonel, felt himself forced to speak a few words to the assembly. He stressed that they had lined up “to safeguard world peace” and that they appreciated “the Germans as a hard-working people”. These words apparently did not find everyone’s approval. NVA officers reasoned that the colonel “deliberately” refrained from using “such terms as brotherhood in arms, GDR and friendship with the Soviet Union” – words that were part of the East German standard vocabulary of alliance policy.<sup>60</sup> This atmospheric picture, which had been scrupulously registered by the MfS, reveals that East German military personnel were quite aware of Romania’s distant position within the alliance and were well able to interpret slight nuances in the speeches. This is confirmed by other opinions gathered by the MfS from NVA members considering it “a great success for us that the Romanian People’s Army participated in the manoeuvre”. The report states further that the manoeuvre demonstrated the “unity and coherence of the socialist states.”<sup>61</sup>

Manoeuvre command staged *Brotherhood in Arms '70* as a manifestation of unity of the seven Warsaw Treaty states. The NVA military journal *Volksarmee* published detailed articles portraying the armed forces of the allied states. The article on the Romanian People’s Army praised the history of the anti-Fascist struggle of Romanian forces in 1944-45, which was referred to as its birth. This struggle had formed the basis for the “close class and arms alliance with the Soviet Union”. Within the Warsaw Pact, the Romanian armed forces had “developed into a modern combat-efficient army.”<sup>62</sup> Although the newspaper presented Romania – in accordance with the East German position – as a close ally in the Warsaw Pact, the statements of Romanian military personnel sprinkled into the reports are characterised by great restraint. Instead of emphasising the “brotherhood in arms”, they referred to the importance of peace and the relations with East Germany.<sup>63</sup> Even in a controlled media landscape, it was impossible to make up reports and statements against the backdrop of a manoeuvre with

international observers.<sup>64</sup> Instead, the reporting needed to be authentic, therefore a press office under the care of the Political Main Administration of the Ministry of Defence made sure the East German newspapers were given suitable material for their coverage.<sup>65</sup>

There were many events intended to illustrate the closeness and the “brotherhood in arms” between the allies. Among them were open-air concerts, balls, visits to factories or joint marches. In total, 1,587 such gatherings with some 154,000 participants were held.<sup>66</sup> Members of the Romanian armed forces were present at some of these events. This was to demonstrate that they also identified with the objectives of the Warsaw Pact and honoured the host country. The latter might have been easy for the Romanians, who were more interested in bilateralism than in multilateralism. Romanian soldiers participated in a great number of events. These included a celebration in the district of Frankfurt an der Oder, a wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate the victims of fascism, the manoeuvre ball and the march of friendship with German, Soviet and Hungarian troops. They visited Jagdgeschwader (Fighter Wing) 3 and were present at the ceremony celebrating the 21st anniversary of the foundation of the GDR. In a list of Military District V detailing the political events in connection with Brotherhood in Arms, the Romanian delegation had been subsequently crossed out for several meetings of commanders, political workers and top performers, an act that might be understood as a possible indication of the Romanian restraint.<sup>67</sup>

The visit of the general commanding the manoeuvre, Minister of Defence Hoffmann, and the Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Pact Yakubovskiy to the Romanian staff at Lieberose on 10 October was of particular significance. They were accompanied by five soldiers each from among the enlisted men, NCOs and officers of the other six member states.<sup>68</sup> These high-level “Meetings of the Brotherhood in Arms”, which were held during the manoeuvre in the quarters of all allied armed forces, were staged political highlights of the manoeuvre. Although some of them had the character of personal meetings, they followed a tight protocol. At first, the commander of the unit assured



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J1011-0002-001  
Foto: Koard, Peter | 11. Oktober 1970

Army General Heinz Hoffmann, Marshal Ivan I. Yakubovsky and General of the Army Sergey M. Shtemenko during their visit to Lieberose, 10 October 1970. On the right, Major General Paul R. Cheler, Commander of the 6<sup>th</sup> Armoured Division of the Romanian People's Army

the visitors of the high combat-readiness of his own troops and informed them about the “excellent, close connection” to the allies. This military part was followed by a “cordial meeting” with military personnel of all ranks. The event was concluded with a “Meeting” (or manifestation) at which Yakubovskiy underlined that the manoeuvre would “*make a contribution to the strengthening of the friendship between the peoples of the socialist community of states*”.<sup>69</sup> The objective of such meetings was to make the frequently invoked but abstract brotherhood in arms come alive. Seemingly informal, spontaneous meetings were to demonstrate the closeness between ranks and nations.<sup>70</sup>

How far this was successful is difficult to judge. The MfS noted that “for the most part” NVA military personnel spoke “positively” about members of other armed forces.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, flags of Warsaw Pact states as well as banners and portraits set up in public spaces were occasionally destroyed.<sup>72</sup> Under the conditions of the one-party dictatorship, this was a way to vent criticism. Individual soldiers disapproved that the symbolism of the manoeuvre reduced its military value. “*The manoeuvre is surrounded by so much policy that every combatant knows in advance how and where to move. [...] Everything is only for show, and after that great reports.*”<sup>73</sup>

Such opinions did not, of course, find their way into the official coverage. According to the manoeuvre newspaper, “the meeting of the brotherhood in arms” with the Romanian troops had shown that the participants were ready “*to increase defence readiness and thus to further expand the military superiority of socialism over imperialism.*”<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless,

international contacts during the manoeuvre were “exceptions” because the duty roster along with lacking language skills proved a considerable hindrance to this exchange.<sup>75</sup>

The publicly displayed unanimity of the allied armed forces concealed the fact that behind the scenes conflicts did exist. For instance, the Romanian Securitate refused to cooperate with the MfS, which monitored the manoeuvre in cooperation with the security agencies of the participating states.<sup>76</sup> While the latter developed an increasingly closer cooperation, the Romanian service maintained an “outsider position” in the socialist alliance.<sup>77</sup>

Political differences existed in particular between Bulgaria and Romania, and this had repercussions on the manoeuvre. The relationship between the two neighbouring states was plunged into a deep crisis after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, as Bulgaria closely followed the Soviet position within the Warsaw Pact and expressed scepticism about Romania striving for sovereignty. The Romanian party leadership, in turn, was afraid that loyal Bulgaria could become a springboard for Soviet invasion in Romania.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, in 1970 it denied transit to the contingents of the Bulgarian People's Army that had been dispatched to *Brotherhood in Arms* '70. The Bulgarians replied with a well-prepared humiliation of the Romanian military delegation during the Brotherhood in Arms meeting that took place in their camp in Königsbrück on 10 October. During a toast, the Romanian delegation was not mentioned and the country was called a “people's democracy”. This was an allusion to the old designation of “People's Republic of Romania”, which

Ceaușescu had changed into “Socialist Republic of Romania” as early as in 1965. During the reception, the Romanian officers had to attend in the tent of the NCOs, which was hardly befitting of their ranks, whereas the Romanian NCOs were sent to the tent of the rank and file. Furthermore, the Romanian flag was absent on the presents for the guests.<sup>79</sup> Whether this was solely due to the belated acceptance of Romania is doubtful given the calculated disregard of the Romanian People’s Army during the meeting. Bulgaria’s course of action can be understood as a clear symbolical and political sign of disapproval of the Romanian attitude within the Warsaw Pact. The MfS, which paid particular attention to such “specific incidents”, did not register similarly serious frictions between the other allies.<sup>80</sup>

Discord was also noticed by the public. While the East German press described *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* as a celebration of military efficiency and alliance-political unity, the Romanian news agency Agerpress emphasised that Romania had sent only a few staff officers to the manoeuvre. Given the iconic political significance of the manoeuvre for both East Germany and the Warsaw Pact, such reports were an unfriendly act that damaged the painstakingly manufactured image of a strong and united alliance. Western media like the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS) or the big daily papers eagerly picked up on news from Bucharest making it quite obvious, at least within the range of Berlin broadcasting stations, that the East German newspapers were exaggerating the Romanian presence.<sup>81</sup>

### Conclusion

In Central Europe, the Cold War did not evolve into a military conflict but remained an abstraction. Large-scale manoeuvres like *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* transferred the antagonism induced by the East-West conflict and the alliance cooperation along with patterns of war and threat situations to a realistic scenario, at least in part. This occurred in the manoeuvre area itself or in public. The coverage of *Brotherhood in Arms ’70*, which in parts consisted of empty phrases, should therefore not be cast aside as content-free but rather examined for its nuances. This is a desideratum

of research. The highly formalised *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* events during the manoeuvre might have been perceived “as politically and ideologically inflated features without real contents”<sup>82</sup> but they gave a face to the Warsaw Pact with its constituent internationalism.

The political obstinacy Romania displayed in the Warsaw Pact in general obviously had an impact on the country’s role during the manoeuvre. Romania’s final manoeuvre report did not mention the political and ideological significance of the exercise. Instead it was restricted to military issues. It expressly praised the East German organisation, “attentiveness and care”. It made a case for appointing “national” referees and translating the Russian command and control documents into the individual national languages in the future.<sup>83</sup> Although there were not, in fact, enough officers with Russian language skills,<sup>84</sup> the suggestions were rather telling of Romania’s distance to the principles of the Soviet dominated alliance.

In the run-up to the manoeuvre, the Soviet Union had applied considerable pressure on the Bucharest leadership. Romania’s military commitment during the manoeuvre, albeit with restraint regarding political symbols, was obviously a way to meet the Soviet requirements without deviating too much from the course of national sovereignty and security. The leadership of the RCP was afraid that unconditional resistance might result in a Soviet intervention. “Categorical opposition” was, therefore, not an option.<sup>85</sup> Rather, it was a manoeuvring policy of sovereignty that exploited leeway within the Warsaw Pact. In fact, the opening phase of détente and the structures of the Warsaw Pact forced the Soviet Union to respond to the demands of smaller states.

For East Germany, which was dependent on the Soviet Union and the Eastern alliance in terms of security policy, *Brotherhood in Arms ’70* meant an increase in prestige during a period of international crisis. The political contacts of Romania and the USSR with the Federal Republic undermined the international course of the GDR. Against this backdrop, the first joint manoeuvre of the Warsaw Pact was designed to underline the important role of East Berlin in this organisation and strengthen the military commitment to the Soviet Union.

Although the central decisions were made in Moscow and not in Strausberg, East Germany was able to note that *Brotherhood in Arms '70* was a symbolic political and military success. In this way, it was able to compensate its lack of political influence on the international scene with influence in the military field.

### Abbreviations

BArch – Bundesarchiv (Federal Archives)

BStU – Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR (The Federal Commissioner for the Files of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic)

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

ČSSR – Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

DDR/GDR – German Democratic Republic

HA – Hauptabteilung (Main Directorate)

MfNV – Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung (Ministry of National Defence)

MfS – Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry of State Security)

NVA – Nationale Volksarmee (National People's Army of the German Democratic Republic)

PHP – Parallel History Project

RGW – Rat für gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance – Comecon)

RIAS – Rundfunk im amerikanischen Sektor (Radio in the American Sector)

RCP – Partidul Comunist Român/Romanian Communist Party

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

US – United States

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> “Waffenbrüderschaft” Nr. 3 (undated), October 1970, Der Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR (hereafter BStU), MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 391. A total of four issues were published. Kurt Kräft and Günter Dietrich, Die neue Stufe des militärischen Zusammenwirkens und der Waffenbrüderschaft zwischen der NVA, der Sowjetarmee und den anderen sozialistischen Brudersarmeen im gemeinsamen Manöver 1970. Unpublished diploma thesis, Karl Marx University Leipzig 1971, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Kampfbestandsmeldung Waffenbrüderschaft (einschließlich Zivilbeschäftigte) (Strength report for Brotherhood in Arms, including civilian employees), as of: 14 October 1970, 1800 hrs, Bundesarchiv (hereafter BArch), DVW 1/25115, fol. 8.

<sup>3</sup> For information on the elaborate East German publicity campaigns see: *Waffenbrüderschaft in der DDR. Konstruktion einer Tradition*. Edited by Deutsch-Russisches Museum Berlin-Karlshorst, n.p. 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, “«Sozialistische Waffenbrüder»? Über die Beziehungen der Nationalen Volksarmee der DDR zu anderen Warschauer-Pakt-Armeen”. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt. Von der Gründung bis zum Zusammenbruch 1955-1991*, edited by Torsten Diedrich, Winfried Heinemann and Christian F. Ostermann, Berlin 2009, pp. 85-118.

<sup>5</sup> Jörg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, *Militärgeschichte als Vergleichs- und Verflechtungsgeschichte*. In: *Militär in Deutschland und Frankreich 1870-2010. Vergleich, Verflechtung und Wahrnehmung zwischen Konflikt und Kooperation*. Edited by Jörg Echternkamp and Stefan Martens, Paderborn et al. 2012, pp. 1-21, here p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Bernhard, Holger Nehring and Anne Rohstock, *Der Kalte Krieg im langen 20. Jahrhundert. Neue Ansätze, Befunde und Perspektiven*. In: *Den Kalten Krieg denken. Beiträge zur sozialen Ideengeschichte seit 1945*. Edited by Patrick Bernhard and Holger Nehring, Essen 2014, pp. 11-39, here p. 11; *Understanding the Imaginary War. Culture, Thought and Nuclear Conflict, 1945-90*. Edited by Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann, Manchester 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Biess, *Republik der Angst. Eine andere Geschichte der Bundesrepublik*, Reinbek 2019; Martin Diebel, *Atomkrieg und andere Katastrophen. Zivil- und Katastrophenschutz in der Bundesrepublik und Großbritannien nach 1945*, Paderborn 2017.

<sup>8</sup> *Das Imaginäre des Kalten Krieges. Beiträge zu einer Kulturgeschichte des Ost-West-Konfliktes in Europa*. Edited by David Eugster and Sibylle Marti, Essen 2015; *Den Kalten Krieg denken*.

<sup>9</sup> This was criticised in Holger Nehring, *What was the Cold War?* In: *English Historical Review*, 127 (2012), pp. 920-949.

<sup>10</sup> György Péteri, *Nylon Curtain: Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe*. In: *Slavonica*, 10 (2004), pp. 113-123. For more on this: Sari Autio-Saraso, *A New Historiography of the Cold War?* In: *European History Quarterly*, 41 (2011), pp. 657-664, here p. 662; Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen, *Beyond the Divide*. In: *Beyond the Divide. Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe*. Edited by Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen, New York/Oxford 2015, pp. 1-19, here p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Frank Umbach, *Das rote Bündnis. Entwicklung und Zerfall des Warschauer Paktes 1955 bis 1991*, Berlin 2005, p. 30.

<sup>12</sup> Wojtech Mastny, *The Warsaw Pact as History*. In: *A Cardboard Castle? An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact*. Edited by Wojtech Mastny and Malcolm Byrne, Budapest et al. 2005, pp. 1-74, here p. 39. See also Umbach, *Das rote Bündnis*, pp. 40-42.

<sup>13</sup> On the divergences within the Warsaw Pact during the 1960s see Gottfried Niedhard, Introduction. CSCE, the German Question and the Eastern Bloc. In: *Cold War Studies*, 18 (2016), pp. 3-13, here p. 8; Jordan Baev, *Die blockinterne Koordination des Warschauer Pakts und die DDR*. In: *Wege zur Wiedervereinigung*. Die beiden deutschen Staaten in ihren Bündnissen 1970 bis 1990. Edited by Oliver Bange and Bernd Lemke, Munich 2013, pp. 183-202; Mastny, *The Warsaw Pact as History*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> Torsten Diedrich, *Die DDR zwischen den Blöcken*. Der Einfluss des Warschauer Paktes auf Staat, Militär und Gesellschaft der DDR. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt*, pp. 59-84, here p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> Hermann Wentker, *Außenpolitik in engen Grenzen*. Die DDR im internationalen System 1949-1989. Munich 2007, here p. 563.

<sup>16</sup> Viktor Meier, Rumänien auf dem Wege der Emanzipation. Die Politik der nationalen Positionsaufwertung innerhalb des "sozialistischen Lagers". In: *Europa-Archiv*, 20 (1965), pp. 491-498.

<sup>17</sup> Dennis Deletant, "Taunting the Bear": Romania and the Warsaw Pact, 1963-89. In: *Cold War History*, 7 (2007), pp. 495-507, here pp. 496 and 498.

<sup>18</sup> Dieter Krüger, *Am Abgrund? Das Zeitalter der Bündnisse: Nordatlantische Allianz und Warschauer Pakt 1947 bis 1991*, Fulda 2013, p. 92.

<sup>19</sup> Carmen Rijnoveanu, Rumänien und die Militärreform des Warschauer Paktes. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt*, pp. 209-224, here pp. 210-211.

<sup>20</sup> Report by Ceaușescu to the Central Committee of the RCP, 18 March 1969. In: *Parallel History Project (PHP)*, Collection: Romania and the Warsaw Pact. Documents Highlighting Romania's Gradual Emancipation from the Warsaw Pact, 1956-1989. Edited by Dennis Deletant, Mihail E. Ionescu and Anna Locher, 2004, <<http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/lory1.ethz.ch/collections/colltopica0e7.html?id=15342>> (last accessed on 4 February 2019).

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Kunze, Nicolae Ceaușescu. Eine Biographie, 3<sup>rd</sup> updated edition, Berlin 2009, p. 170.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Ulrich Weiß, *Kulturarbeit als diplomatischer Zankapfel*. Die kulturellen Auslandsbeziehungen im Dreiecksverhältnis der beiden deutschen Staaten und Rumäniens von 1950 bis 1972, Munich 2010, pp. 12 and 177.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 183-185 and 248-250. See the (albeit incomplete) overview in Umbach, *Das rote Bündnis*, p. 126.

<sup>24</sup> Douglas Selvage, *The Warsaw Pact and the German Question*. In: *NATO and the Warsaw Pact*.

*Intrabloc Conflicts*. Edited by Mary Ann Heiss and Victor Papacosma, Kent 2008, pp. 178-192, here pp. 180-181; Baev, *Die blockinterne Koordination*, pp. 189-190.

<sup>25</sup> Wojtech Mastny, XI. Meeting of the PCC, Moscow, 20 August 1970. Editorial Note. In: *PHP, Collection: Records of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee, 1955-1990*. Edited by Wojtech Mastny et al., 2001, <[http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/lory1.ethz.ch/collections/coll\\_pcc/ednote\\_70a.html](http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/lory1.ethz.ch/collections/coll_pcc/ednote_70a.html)> (last accessed on 5 February 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Douglas A. Macgregor, *The Soviet-East German Military Alliance*, Cambridge et al. 2008 (1st edition 1989), p. 59.

<sup>27</sup> Speech by Ceaușescu in: *PHP, Collection: Records of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee*.

<sup>28</sup> Kunze, Nicolae Ceaușescu, p. 178.

<sup>29</sup> The danger of an invasion is seen by Deletant, "Taunting the Bear", p. 499; Dennis Deletant and Mihail E. Ionescu, *Romania within the Warsaw Pact: 1955-1989*, Washington, DC 2004, p. 27; opposing views can be found in Kunze, Nicolae Ceaușescu, p. 179; Mastny, *The Warsaw Pact as History*, p. 38. Even Bundeswehr Command expected a potential Soviet invasion, see Bundesministerium der Verteidigung (West German Ministry of Defence), Command Staff of the Army, Notes, 27. August 1968, in: *Dokumente zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1945-1990*. Bundesrepublik und DDR im Ost-West-Konflikt. Edited by Christoph Nübel, Berlin 2019, Document 97.

<sup>30</sup> Deletant, "Taunting the Bear", p. 496. Werner Kowarik, *Landesverteidigung*. In: *Südosteuropa-Handbuch*, vol. 2: Rumänien. Edited by Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, Göttingen 1977, pp. 232-239, here p. 239; Carmen Rijnoveanu, *Die Auswirkungen der Krisen des Ostblocks 1956 und 1968 auf das rumänische Sicherheitskonzept*. In: *Militär und Staatssicherheit im Sicherheitskonzept der Warschauer-Pakt-Staaten*. Edited by Torsten Diedrich and Walter Süß, Berlin 2010, pp. 149-165, here pp. 159-160.

<sup>31</sup> On the reform of the Warsaw Pact and the position of Romania see Petre Oprei, *Die rumänische Armee und die gemeinsamen Manöver des Warschauer Paktes*. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt*, pp. 185-207, here pp. 192-193; Rijnoveanu, *Rumänien*, pp. 212-213; Umbach, *Das rote Bündnis*, p. 143.

<sup>32</sup> Military attaché, Bucharest. File memo on a talk with the Romanian military delegation on 20 October 1965, 1 November 1965, BArch, DVW 1/114472, fols. 222-227.

<sup>33</sup> Wenzke, *Sozialistische Waffenbrüder*, p. 106.

<sup>34</sup> Bestand DVW 1. Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung, Verträge. Edited by Albrecht Kästner, Freiburg 1999, p. III, <<http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/kms2.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/PHP/21949/>

publicationdocument\_singledocument/c709e02f-492a-4417-86f4-af798352e3eb/de/16\_Find-buecherVertraege.pdf» (last accessed on 6 March 2019).

<sup>35</sup> Cf. the letters between MfNV and Unified Command, BArch, DVW 1/24654 as well as Protocol of the meeting of the Politburo of 28 April 1970, BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1281, fol. 103.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Info folder (Übersichtsmappe) “Waffenbrüderschaft 70”, BArch, DVW 1/27777, fols. 1-20. As early as 1963, Hoffmann had already been commanding the *Quartett* manoeuvre with the participation of armed forces from Czechoslovakia, Poland and the USSR.

<sup>37</sup> MfNV, Political Main Administration, Talking points for the Manoeuvre Brotherhood in Arms, BStU, MfS, SdM, Nr. 1487, fol. 23.

<sup>38</sup> Protocol of the meeting of the Politburo of 28 April 1970, BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1281, fol. 103.

<sup>39</sup> MfNV, Political Main Administration, Talking points for the Manoeuvre Brotherhood in Arms, BStU, MfS, SdM, Nr. 1487, fol. 23. Cf. also Head of the Political Administration of Military District V, Presentation at a Military Council meeting, 11 September 1970, BArch, DVH 17/180870, fols. 6-18.

<sup>40</sup> Heinz Hoffmann, *Sozialistische Landesverteidigung*. Aus Reden und Aufsätzen 1970 bis Februar 1974, Berlin 1974, pp. 78-81, here pp. 78 and 80. The article was published on 11 October 1970.

<sup>41</sup> Ion Ioniță, Report to Ceaușescu on talks in Moscow, 3-4 March 1970. In: PHP, Collection: Romania and the Warsaw Pact.

<sup>42</sup> Opriș, *Die rumänische Armee*, pp. 194-195; Rijnoveanu, *Rumänien*, p. 218.

<sup>43</sup> Kowarik, *Landesverteidigung*, pp. 235 and 237.

<sup>44</sup> Gheorghe, Report to on the meeting of 9 September 1969 (undated). In: PHP, Collection: Romania and the Warsaw Pact.

<sup>45</sup> Intelligence Information Cable, 7 July 1969. In: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, Volume XXIX, Eastern Europe; Eastern Mediterranean, 1969-1972. Edited by James E. Miller, Douglas E. Selva and Laurie Van Hook, Washington 2007, Doc. 179, «<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v29>» (last accessed on 13 March 2019).

<sup>46</sup> MfS, HA A, Markus Wolf, report to Minister Erich Mielke, 26 February 1970, BStU, MfS, SdM Nr. 580, fol. 160.

<sup>47</sup> *Bittere Ernte*, *Der Spiegel* 1970, no. 13, pp. 142-144.

<sup>48</sup> CIA, Memorandum, “Romania: Maverick in trouble?” 20 May 1970, pp. 2 and 4. In: CIA-Library, «<https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79R00967A000200020013-7.pdf>» (last accessed on 6 March 2019).

<sup>49</sup> Report by Ceaușescu to the RCP, 20 May 1970. In: PHP, Collection: Romania and the Warsaw Pact.

<sup>50</sup> Report MfS, HA A, Markus Wolf, to Minister Erich Mielke, 26 February 1970, BStU, MfS, SdM Nr. 580, fol. 161.

<sup>51</sup> “Bittere Ernte”, *Der Spiegel* 1970, no. 13, p. 143.

<sup>52</sup> Report MfS, HA A, Markus Wolf, to Minister Erich Mielke, 26 February 1970, BStU, MfS, SdM Nr. 580, fol. 161. The assumption that “tactical concessions” might be a way out is also made in CIA Memorandum “Romania: Maverick in trouble?”, 20 May 1970, p. 24.

<sup>53</sup> The statute of 17 March 1969 is printed in: Mastny, *A Cardboard Castle?*, Doc. 62.

<sup>54</sup> Ioniță, Report about the meeting of 3/4 March 1970 to Ceaușescu, 1 [recte: 7] March 1970. In: PHP, Romania and the Warsaw Pact.

<sup>55</sup> Letter of 27 December 1968, BArch, DVW 1/24654, fols. 238-239.

<sup>56</sup> Protocol of the meeting of the Politburo of 28 April 1970, BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1281, fol. 175.

<sup>57</sup> 9 September 1970, DVW 1/115667 (no pagination).

<sup>58</sup> BArch, DVW 1/24654, fol. 240-241.

<sup>59</sup> *Kampfbestandsmeldung Waffenbrüderschaft (einschließlich Zivilbeschäftigte)* (Strength report for Brotherhood in Arms, including civilian employees), as of 14 October, 1800 hrs, BArch, DVW 1/25115, fol. 8.

<sup>60</sup> MfS, Führungsstelle Abwehr, Informationsbericht 6/70 “Waffenbrüderschaft”, 5 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fol. 394.

<sup>61</sup> *Stimmungsbericht (Mood report)* No. 9, 8 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fol. 35.

<sup>62</sup> “Erben von Satu Mare und Carei”, *Volkarmee*, Special edition, October 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 401.

<sup>63</sup> “Waffenbrüder grüßen Cottbus”, *Lausitzer Rundschau* no. 242, 12 October 1970, p. 3; “Soldatenwort”, “Waffenbrüderschaft” no. 1 (undated), October 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 381; “Dazulernen von den Waffenbrüdern”, “Waffenbrüderschaft” no. 3 (no date), October 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 391.

<sup>64</sup> On the structural conditions of the press in East Germany see Anke Fiedler, *Medienlenkung in der DDR*, Cologne, Weimar, Vienna 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Marek Krüger, *Die militärpolitische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der NVA am Beispiel des Manövers “Waffenbrüderschaft” (1970)* unpublished diploma thesis, Bundeswehr University 2004, p. 114. On the structures of the media control exercised by the Political Main Administration see Kräft and Dietrich, *Die*

neue Stufe des militärischen Zusammenwirkens und der Waffenbrüderschaft, fols. 50-51, here fol. 88.

<sup>66</sup> Hoffmann, Abschlussbericht (Final Report), 9 November 1970, BArch, DVW 1/43713, fol. 199.

<sup>67</sup> Most of the entries regarding the Romanian armed forces were edited after the event, see Leiter Politische Verwaltung des Militärbezirks V, Plan der politischen Arbeit (Plan for the political work), 19 June 1970, BArch, DVH 17/180871.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, fol. 37.

<sup>69</sup> "Waffenbrüder eng verbunden", Lausitzer Rundschau no. 242, 12 October 1970. Cf. also the coverage in Neues Deutschland, 11 October 1970.

<sup>70</sup> On the staging of the meetings see Christoph Nübel, Herzlichkeit als Handarbeit. Zur Bildgeschichte des Truppenbesuchs von Erich Honecker bei der NVA 1984. In: Portal Militärgeschichte, 2 January 2017, «[http://portal-militaergeschichte.de/nuebel\\_honecker](http://portal-militaergeschichte.de/nuebel_honecker)» (last accessed on 19 February 2019).

<sup>71</sup> MfS, Führungsstelle Abwehr, Bericht (Report), 17 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fol. 187.

<sup>72</sup> MfS, Führungsstelle Abwehr, Informationsbericht (Information report) 10/70, 9 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fols. 334-335.

<sup>73</sup> MfS, Führungsstelle Abwehr, Informationsbericht (Information report) 16/70, 15 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fol. 240.

<sup>74</sup> "Waffenbrüderschaft" no. 1, (no date), October 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 383.

<sup>75</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, Die NVA als Koalitionssarmee im Warschauer Pakt unter besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer Beziehungen zur Ungarischen Volksarmee. In: Die NVA und die Ungarische Volksarmee im Warschauer Pakt. Edited by Hans-Hubertus Mack, László Veszprémy and Rüdiger Wenzke, Potsdam 2011, pp. 31-45, here p. 43.

<sup>76</sup> MfS, HA I, Abschlussbericht zum Manöver "Waffenbrüderschaft" (Final report on "Brotherhood in Arms"), 29 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, vol. 15504, part 1, fol. 20; cf. Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe, Mitteilungskarte an Minister (Information for Secretary), 5 June 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG 23027, fol. 103.

<sup>77</sup> Georg Herbstritt, Entzweite Freunde. Rumänien, die Securitate und die DDR-Staatssicherheit 1950 bis 1989, Göttingen 2016, p. 207.

<sup>78</sup> Stephen Fischer-Galati, "Foreign Policy". In: Südosteuropa-Handbuch, pp. 198-231, here pp. 219 and 225.

<sup>79</sup> MfS, Führungsstelle Abwehr, Informationsbericht 12/70 "Waffenbrüderschaft" (Information on "Brotherhood in Arms") 11 October 1970, BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303, fols. 302-303.

<sup>80</sup> This was in part due to the fact that the security services of the allied states usually investigated such cases themselves and informed the MfS only on a case-by-case basis. Cf. Reports in BStU, MfS, HA I, Nr. 14303; HA I, Nr. 15504, HA I, Nr. 19113.

<sup>81</sup> Report by RIAS, 14 October 1970, BStU, MfS, ZAIG, Nr. 11854, fol. 328; References to the press reports in Krüger, Die militärpolitische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit der NVA, p. 66.

<sup>82</sup> Wenzke, Sozialistische Waffenbrüder, p. 107.

<sup>83</sup> Undated report, BArch, DVW 1/24659, fols. 1714-1715.

<sup>84</sup> MfNV, Abschlussbericht "Waffenbrüderschaft" (Final report on "Brotherhood in Arms"), BArch, DVW 1/24659, fol. 1646.

<sup>85</sup> As stated in Rijnoveanu, Rumänien, p. 221. Ceaușescu's ability to compromise is emphasised in Kunze, Nicolae Ceaușescu, p. 158.

V S - A K T E (1)

Sekretariat des Ministers

Betreff: Schriftverkehr mit Genossen  
Honecker 1965

Reg.Nr.: A/00 297 1.Ausf. 248 .Blatt

Aufbewahrung im Archiv: ständig

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## Aktenvermerk Nr.: 2 / 65

Inhalt: Gespräch mit der rumänischen Militärdelegation, die an dem Herbstmanöver "Oktobersturm" in der DDR teilgenommen hat.

Datum / Zeit: 28. 10. 1965, 14.00 bis 19.00 Uhr

Ort: Sondermaschine der rumänischen Militärdelegation

Teilnehmer: Minister Armeegeneral Leontin Salajan,  
Stellv.d.Ministers u.Chef d.  
Generalstabes Generalleutnant Ion Gheorghie,  
Generalleutnant Marin Nicolescu,  
Generalmajor Nicolae Crisan,  
Generalleutnant E. Marschenko (Vertreter des  
Vereinten Oberkommandos bei den rumänischen Streitkräften),  
Oberstleutnant Zander

### Text:

1. Ich stellte an den Minister Salajan die Frage, welche Eindrücke er von seinem Aufenthalt in der DDR mitnehme. Der Minister sagte, daß er und die gesamte Delegation sehr zufrieden über den Aufenthalt seien. Die Betreuung und Organisation sei vorbildlich gewesen. Die deutschen Genossen hätten sich sehr um die rumänische Delegation gekümmert. Er habe sehr wertvolle Gespräche mit Gen. Walter Ulbricht, Gen. Hoffmann und anderen Genossen geführt. Ihn verbinde eine feste Freundschaft mit dem Gen. Hoffmann und den anderen deutschen Genossen. Als Freunde waren sie bei Freunden. Er habe sich davon überzeugen können, welchen großen Fortschritt die NVA in den letzten Jahren gemacht habe. Die Armeeangehörigen werden gut an den modernsten Waffen ausgebildet.

Minister Salajan teilte mir vertraulich mit (die anderen Teilnehmer konnten das nicht hören), daß in nächster Zeit eine Einladung an den

Minister Gen. Armeegeneral Hoffmann ergehe zum Besuch einer Militärdelegation der NVA unter Leitung des Ministers im 1. Halbjahr 1966 in der SRR. Die Vorabsprachen wären bereits erfolgt und der Besuch der Militärdelegation der NVA in der SRR wird ein großer Höhepunkt in den Beziehungen beider Armeen und das im 10. Jahr des Bestehens der NVA.

## 2. Struktur des Vereinten Oberkommandos

Im weiteren fand ein Gespräch zwischen Minister Salajan und dem Vertreter des Vereinten Oberkommandos bei den rumänischen Streitkräften, Generalleutnant Marschenko, statt. Der Minister brachte dabei zum Ausdruck, daß die derzeitige Struktur des Vereinten Oberkommandos nicht seinen Vorstellungen entspreche. Er sei der Auffassung, daß es besser dem nationalen und internationalen Interesse der sozialistischen Staaten entspreche, wenn im Rahmen der Teilnehmerstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages ein Ministerrat der Verteidigungsminister geschaffen werde. Den Vorsitz sollte periodisch einer der Verteidigungsminister übernehmen. Dieser Ministerrat habe die Aufgabe, den Plan der Maßnahmen für eine Periode zu beschließen. Die Funktion des Oberkommandierenden der Vereinten Streitkräfte sollte periodisch von einem Stellvertretenden Minister der Teilnehmerstaaten besetzt werden. Der Oberkommandierende dürfe keine Entscheidungen außerhalb des bestätigten Planes treffen. Wenn es notwendig sei, daß außerhalb des bestätigten Planes Entscheidungen getroffen werden müssen, hat der Oberkommandierende alle Verteidigungsminister zu konsultieren oder zu beantragen, daß der Ministerrat zusammentritt. Bei allen Entscheidungen sei zu berücksichtigen, daß die jeweilige Partei- und Staatsführung konsultiert wird und die Entscheidung billigt. Es kann nicht so sein, daß der Oberkommandierende Alarmbereitschaft für alle Armeen befiehlt, ohne daß die Zustimmung der jeweiligen Parteiführung vorliegt (s. kubanische Krise). Er (Minister Salajan) könne sich vorstellen, daß an den Staatsgrenzen der DDR plötzlich Maßnahmen für die Sicherung des sozialistischen Lagers eingeleitet werden müssen, an denen alle Streitkräfte des Warschauer Vertrages sich zu beteiligen haben. In dieser Situation habe sich der Gen. Walter Ulbricht mit allen Parteiführern in Verbindung zu setzen, um ihm Vorschläge zu unterbreiten, wie die Situation geklärt werden soll. Nach Zustimmung

aller Parteiführungen erhält der Ministerrat der Verteidigungsminister die Aufgabe, die Maßnahmen durchzuführen. Je nach der Situation kann das alles sehr schnell und wenn notwendig, telefonisch erfolgen.

Er ist auch der Meinung, daß es zweckmäßiger sei, wenn die Vertreter des Vereinten Oberkommandos in den einzelnen Armeen nicht nur von einer Armee gestellt werden, sondern alle Armeen daran beteiligt werden. Er könne sich vorstellen, daß ein General der NVA als Vertreter des Vereinten Oberkommandos bei den rumänischen Streitkräften tätig ist. In diesem Zusammenhang brachte er zum Ausdruck, daß man nicht nur von einer Armee lernen dürfe (er meine damit die Sowjetarmee), sondern sich die Erfahrungen aller Armeen zunutze machen müsse. Es sei bekannt, daß vor dem 2. Weltkrieg die deutsche Armee die stärkste und schlagkräftigste Armee der Welt gewesen sei (er zitiert dabei Stalin). Wenn er an der Stelle von Gen. Hoffmann stünde, würde er sich die Erfahrungen der heutigen westdeutschen Armee zu eigen machen, da ja diese Armee sein Gegner sein wird.

Minister Salajan sagte dazu noch, daß auch andere Verteidigungsminister (Namen nannte er nicht) im Prinzip seine Meinung in Fragen der Struktur des Vereinten Oberkommandos unterstützen, aber keiner der Minister habe bisher offen mit Marschall Gretscho darüber gesprochen. Er habe in Erfurt mit Marschall Gretscho kurz über diese Frage gesprochen, aber er hatte keine Gelegenheit, ausführlich seine Meinung darzulegen, werde das aber noch tun.

### 3. Frage des Atomgeheimnisses

Minister Salajan schnitt dann die Frage an, daß die SU der alleinige Inhaber des Atomgeheimnisses im sozialistischen Lager sei. Im Westen bestehen 3 Atomkräfte (USA, Frankreich und England). Das sei gegenwärtig für das sozialistische Lager eine ungünstige Situation. Wenn aber die sozialistischen Länder das Geheimnis der Atombombe der SU kennen würden, sähe diese Situation in der Welt wesentlich anders aus. Dabei ließ sich Minister Salajan von Generalleutnant Marschenko nicht davon überzeugen, daß man ein Land, das einmal eine Atombombe gezündet hat, nicht als Atomstreitmacht bezeichnen kann.

Generalleutnant Marschenko versuchte den Minister auch davon zu über-

zeugen, daß es nicht notwendig sei, daß alle sozialistischen Länder das Atomgeheimnis besitzen. Je mehr Atomkräfte es gibt, je größer ist die Gefahr eines Atomkrieges. Vielleicht könnte das eine oder das andere Land, wenn es im Besitz der Atombombe sei, Unheil anrichten. Darauf schaltete sich der Chef des Generalstabes, Generalleutnant Ion Gheorghe ein und fragte sehr scharf: "Glauben Sie, wenn China oder Albanien die Atombombe besitzt, daß sie den Atomkrieg beginnen würden? Denn China und Albanien ist ja kein imperialistischer Staat." Darauf Generalleutnant Marschenko: "China ist kein imperialistischer Staat, aber ein Abenteurer."

#### 4. Rumänische Offiziere, die mit sowjetischen Frauen verheiratet sind.

Generalleutnant Marschenko stellte an den Minister die Frage, warum in der Vergangenheit rumänische Offiziere, die mit sowjetischen Frauen verheiratet sind, aus leitenden Funktionen in der Armee entlassen oder in niedrigere Funktionen versetzt wurden. Der Minister sagte dazu, ihm sei davon nichts bekannt, daß rumänische Offiziere, weil sie mit sowjetischen Frauen verheiratet sind, gemäßregelt wurden. Ihm sei wohl bekannt, daß ein Teil sowjetischer Frauen von rumänischen Offizieren negativ über die rumänische Politik gesprochen habe, aber wer die rumänische Butter, Wurst und Brot esse und alle Vorteile des sozialistischen Aufbaus für sich in Anspruch nimmt und keine Politik für Rumänien, sondern gegen Rumänien betreibt, ist für uns nicht tragbar. Wenn dieser Offizier sich nicht von seiner Frau trennt, trennen wir uns von ihm. Außerdem sei er überzeugt, daß ein Teil der sowjetischen Frauen mit Auftrag Spionage in Rumänien getrieben haben und vielleicht heute noch treiben.

#### 5. Verhältnis Kuba - SRR

Der Minister stellte an Generalleutnant Marschenko die Frage, ob ihm bekannt sei, daß es eine Empfehlung gäbe, den Minister für Streitkräfte der Republik Kuba, Raoul Castro Ruz, in die Warschauer Vertragsstaaten einzuladen. Rumänien sei dieser Empfehlung nicht nachgekommen, da das Verhältnis Kuba - SRR gespannt sei. Die Schuld an den Spannungen liege nicht bei den Rumänen.

Die kubanische Botschaft in Bukarest habe an die rumänischen Behörden einen Antrag gestellt, anlässlich des Tages "Sturz des Bastian-Regimes

in Kuba" eine Studentenkundgebung auf offener Straße durchzuführen. Die rumänischen Behörden haben dieses Ansuchen mit der Begründung abgelehnt, daß solche Art von Kundgebungen in Rumänien nicht üblich seien. Darauf beantragte die kubanische Botschaft einen großen Saal. Dieser Saal konnte aber für den geforderten Termin und in der erforderlichen Größe nicht zur Verfügung gestellt werden, sondern erst 3 Tage später. Die Kubaner forderten aber für den von ihnen festgelegten Termin einen großen Saal. Die kubanische Seite war beleidigt, weil ihre Forderungen nicht erfüllt wurden und zog darauf alle in Rumänien studierenden Kubaner ab. Die rumänische Seite habe verlangt, daß die kubanische Regierung sich bei den rumänischen Genossen über ihr Verhalten (Einmischung in die inneren Angelegenheiten Rumäniens) entschuldige. Dies sei aber bis heute noch nicht geschehen. Kuba solle aber nicht glauben, daß die Beziehungen zwischen sozialistischen Staaten aus Forderungen von einer Seite bestehen, sondern auf der Grundlage der Nichteinmischung in die inneren Angelegenheiten anderer Staaten.

Abschließende Bemerkungen:

Die Unterhaltung im Flugzeug wurde besonders vom Minister sehr laut und wortreich geführt, wobei zu bemerken ist, daß der Minister sehr viel Alkohol während der Diskussion trank.

Aus der Meinung des Ministers zu Strukturfragen des Vereinten Oberkommandos und Fragen des Atomgeheimnisses konnte man entnehmen, daß sich die rumänische Parteiführung damit beschäftigt und daß evtl. bei der nächsten Tagung des Politischen Beratenden Ausschusses der Teilnehmerstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages die rumänische Seite in dieser Richtung Vorschläge machen wird.

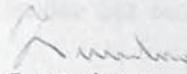
Der Minister brachte mehrmals indirekt zum Ausdruck, daß er mit der Arbeitsweise von Marschall Gretschno nicht einverstanden ist. Er wiederholte dabei oft: "Es geht nicht gegen Marschall Gretschno, es geht nicht gegen die SU, es geht um das sozialistische Prinzip der Zusammenarbeit."

Sehr phrasenhaft erklärte er zum wiederholten Male, daß sein Herz der SU für alle Zeiten gehöre und trotzdem ist er mit einigen Praktiken der sowjetischen Politik nicht einverstanden.

Ich habe mich an dem Gespräch zwischen dem Minister Salajan und Generalleutnant Marschenko nicht beteiligt.

Wenige Tage nach dem Eintreffen in Bukarest habe ich mit Generalleutnant Marschenko die Gespräche im Flugzeug noch einmal rekonstruiert, um bei diesem Vermerk Hörfehler auszuschalten. Das Gespräch wurde in russischer Sprache geführt. Für den Minister dolmetschte Generalmajor Crişan.

Oberstleutnant



Z a n d e r

# BETWEEN ALLIED LOYALTY AND NATIONAL INTERESTS. PARTICIPATION OF THE ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES IN JOINT EXERCISES AND MANOEUVRES OF THE UNITED ARMED FORCES UNDER THE WARSAW TREATY

SORIN-VASILE NEGOIȚĂ

In response to the creation, in 1949, of the North-Atlantic Alliance and the subsequent integration of West Germany into it, the communist states of Eastern Europe signed, in 1955, the Warsaw Treaty<sup>1</sup>, a military alliance meant to provide defence against threats that the West could create. As in other coalitions of forces, within the Warsaw Treaty, an important problem was to improve the training of the headquarters (HQs) and troops of the Member States, by carrying out, in particular, numerous joint exercises and manoeuvres. These were planned and executed in accordance with the Soviet military doctrine, with the main purpose of training the common Armed Forces of the Treaty in order to combat probable aggression on Alliance territory. At the same time, it also had the role of preventing Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Hungary from adopting military doctrines of territorial defence<sup>2</sup>, which would have ensured the necessary conditions for acquiring the ability to waging a defensive war on its own territory, as the other communist state had at that time, their ally Romania and its neighbour Yugoslavia (which had not acceded to the Treaty).

## **I. The organization and the conducting of the joint exercises and manoeuvres under the Warsaw Treaty**

The system of joint exercises and manoeuvres carried out under the Warsaw Treaty, both

in a multilateral format, with the participation of the armed forces of several Treaty Member States and bilaterally (the Soviet and another's Member State Armed Forces), was put in place, only in 1961, under the leadership of Soviet Marshal A.A. Grechko, the commander-in-chief of the United Armed Forces<sup>3</sup> (UAF) at that time. Joint exercises/manoeuvres took also place until 1961, at the tactical level<sup>4</sup>, but starting this year, they would be carried out, regularly, on an operational and strategic level, with the participation of almost all categories of armed forces and types of troops.<sup>5</sup>

Under the Warsaw Treaty, there were carried out joint manoeuvres with troops and command staff exercises, with or without communications, on the ground or on the map. I tried to present in Annex 1, from different sources, a comprehensive list of the strategic-operative level exercises/manoeuvres jointly carried out by the Member States of the Treaty, starting with 1961.<sup>6</sup> I believe that this list isn't a complete list of joint exercises and manoeuvres within the Treaty, but it's probably a significant part of them and doesn't include those on a tactical level. In addition, it should be added that, starting with 1975, the Helsinki Agreements entered into the force, which required both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty reporting only the exercises involving more than 25,000 troops and encouraged observers to be invited. Thus, it is possible that after 1975, the Soviets would have imposed a reduction in the number of participants and limited

the publication of information on the system of joint exercises and manoeuvres. The following conclusions can be drawn from the annex: between 1961-1966 approximately 3 exercises were performed per year, between 1967 and 1974 they increased their frequency to 4-11 exercises per year, and from 1975 they were limited to 1, 2, rarely 3 exercises per year.

The joint exercises and manoeuvres were carried out, generally, on well-defined areas of action, on the territory of all Member States, with the participation of the troops/units belonging to the Soviet Armed Forces (USSR) and of the states related to the respective area (e.g. WEST/NORTH-WEST – East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary or SOUTH/SOUTH-EAST – Romania and Bulgaria) and with guests/delegates from the other Member States of the Treaty, in some situations even from China. The exercises/manoeuvres were mainly planned in the WEST and NORTH-WEST areas, due to the greater possibility of a conflict in the border area between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO, but also in the SOUTH-WEST, SOUTH and SOUTH-EAST areas, on the Italian, Greek and Turkish directions.

Some exercises/manoeuvres were conducted during periods of tension or even in areas of armed risk, constituting a good rehearsal before possible future actions<sup>7</sup> (e.g. October 1961, during the Berlin crisis or August 1968, during the invasion in Czechoslovakia).

The exercises and manoeuvres were planned and carried out in accordance with the Joint Action Plan of the UAF HQs, with the aim of improving the training of the HQs and troops of the Member States, by experimenting with new forms and methods of joint actions, but also for strengthening the relations between the allies and improving the cooperation of their troops and staffs during the execution of joint actions under different combat conditions.

Referring to this aspect, Marshal Ivan Ignatyevich Yakubovskiy, commander-in-chief of the UAF HQs, stated<sup>8</sup>: *“The joint exercises take place annually according to an agreed-upon plan. It is necessary to emphasize that great attention is devoted in the United Armed Forces to the exchange of experience of the training of*

*soldiers and sailors. The National and United HQs, the commanders and staffs of the Allied armies everything which is best in the combat and the political training of personnel, and in the method of training and in the educational-material basis. The United HQs and the Staff of the United Armed Forces generalize the leading experience of the Allied Armed Forces and share it for the achievements of all commanders, staffs and troops.”*

The conceptions of the exercises/manoeuvres (in the view of the USSR and its 5 loyal Member States<sup>9</sup>) generally considered the existence of imperialism and some forces opposed to socialism and peace, as well as the theory that the dependence on one's own forces was avoided and the multilateral intervention on the territory of the other member state was facilitated, for the common defence of the gains of socialism against external enemies. The sources do not explicitly indicate whether the actions taken during joint exercises and manoeuvres were offensive or defensive, rarely mentioning the deployment of extensive defensive actions, and sometimes refer to conducting intense offensive actions in response to a NATO attack. Also, the evidence suggests that the practice of defending the national territory by national elements under national command was excluded, however.

The management of the exercises and manoeuvres<sup>10</sup> was generally ensured by the defence ministers / generals belonging to the states where these took place or by the UAF commander-in-chief (his deputy)/chief of staff.

Apart from the stated goals, an important objective pursued by the system of joint exercises and manoeuvres was the periodic “return” of Soviet troops and other troops of the Pact member states to the three countries where the Soviet troops were not stationed: Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. As a mutual gesture, the troops of these three countries were invited to take part in exercises/manoeuvres on the territory of the other Member States and, in some situations, even on the territory of the USSR.

Through exercises and manoeuvres, in which about one third were exclusively in the national territory, one third entirely in a foreign territory, and the other third in joint, both

in the national territory and abroad, as well as through assignment of the exercise command, with one third by their own generals and two thirds by foreign generals (especially from the UAF leadership), the Soviets sought, on the one hand, to decrease the capacity of the national defence ministries to develop capabilities for conducting a war on the national territory and, on the other hand, to reduce the possibilities for the officers to acquire the necessary experience to conduct the combined actions for the defence of the national territory.<sup>11</sup>

An important characteristic of the exercises/manoeuvres carried out under the Warsaw Treaty and frequently used, according to sources, was the simulation of the use of the nuclear weapon, without taking into account its side effects.

At the end of the exercises/manoeuvres, assessments were done, analysing the actions taken, highlighting the shortcomings, drawing lessons and making recommendations that had to be introduced into the practice of troop training. At the same time, after some well-defined periods (winter, summer, half-yearly, annual, etc.), the UAF commander-in-chief issued a *“Directive on the operational and combat readiness of the UAF of the Warsaw Treaty states”*, which presented the resulting conclusions from the exercises/manoeuvres, war games or meeting sessions held during that period and set the guidelines for the next training period of the troops (Annex 2).

Relevant are the records from the Krasnaia Zvezda editorial of September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969, when, in the Oder-Neisse (Poland) manoeuvre communiqué, it was stated *“The goal of these exercises is the evaluation of the training of troops in 1969...”* or a few years later, on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1976, when the Polish General Josef Kaminski, the deputy chief of staff of the UAF, declared *“According to the results of the exercises and manoeuvres, necessary conclusions are drawn and then recommendations are made for the introduction into the troop training.”*<sup>12</sup>

## **II. Particularities regarding the Romanian Army participation in joint exercises and manoeuvres**

From the beginning, I consider it important to clarify some aspects that have influenced

the participation of the Romanian Army in the joint exercises and manoeuvres organized by the UAF of the Warsaw Treaty and which have determined the way of training their own armed forces:

- from a geopolitical and geostrategic point of view, Romania was positioned in the so-called “echelon II” of the territory related to the Warsaw Treaty member states, being surrounded (with the exception of the Black Sea) by other treaty member states or from the same political family (the case of Yugoslavia);
- the Soviet troops had not been stationed in Romania since 1958, as in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria;
- with the taking over of the political leadership in Bucharest by Nicolae Ceaușescu in 1965, the vision on the development of joint exercises and manoeuvres has changed radically, considering that they will prevent the Romanian state to determine its own capabilities of the Armed Forces, questioning the right of command and control of the UAF leadership over the Romanian forces;
- Romania was the only country in the Communist Bloc that established, starting with 1967, diplomatic relations with West Germany;
- Romania participated with command and staff personnel and/or troops in exercises/manoeuvres only in allied format, within the Warsaw Treaty, rarely in bilateral format, and in most cases in its area of military actions.

In Romania, as in Yugoslavia, the theoretical basis for the training of personnel through exercises/manoeuvres constituted its own military doctrine, which rejected the theory and practice of Soviet military doctrine, in terms of territorial defence. In fact, this doctrine represented a permanent invitation to the defence ministries of Eastern European countries to adopt their own strategies for territorial defence. Romania, like Yugoslavia, assumed that the aggressor would use conventional weapons rather than nuclear weapons. Romania’s military art (strategy, operations and tactics) addressed the issue of ensuring the survival of the armed forces and the national political leadership in the event of the occupation of any country by an enemy force estimated at 750,000-1,250,000 soldiers. In contradiction

with Yugoslavia, Romania, as a member of the Pact, was much more cautious in condemning the military blocs, but the Romanians strongly rejected the Soviet military-political axioms regarding aggressive imperialist actions on Romania.<sup>13</sup>

On the territory of Romania, joint exercises and manoeuvres were carried out, but in a smaller number than in the other member states of the Pact, of which very few with troops. Thus, in 1962, Romania agreed, as did Czechoslovakia, to conduct joint exercises and manoeuvres with troops of the Pact member states on its territory, but this decision would not last until 1964.<sup>14</sup> After that, in Romania took place only command staff exercises on the map, with the participation of staffs from the Soviet and Bulgarian armies. At the same time, the Romanian Armed Forces participated in manoeuvres with troops on the territory of other states until 1965, usually in the composition of several Fronts<sup>15</sup> (Balkan, Central European, etc.) and not on a certain direction.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning the refusal of the Romanian authorities to organize or participate in manoeuvres with troops, a series of discussions<sup>17</sup> took place between the leadership of the Romanian Army and the UAF Command, the first in November 1964, when Army General Ion Tutoveanu, the Chief of the General Staff of that time, raised some problems when discussing the project of the conception of using the Romanian Armed Forces.

These referred to the establishment of a Romanian Front in case of war, which would include the majority of the Romanian Armed Forces, to act on an independent direction of operations, as well as to the decision that the grouping of forces on army HQs, army corps and reserve ones be an exclusive attribute of the Romanian Minister of the Armed Forces. Also, in the context in which the Romanian Armed Forces had the mission to act especially in the direction of operations towards the south, a special attention had to be paid to keeping at the disposal of the Romanian High Command, on the national territory, in reserve, some forces that act according to the provisions of the Government against the maritime assault, which would have landed on the coast and for the liquidation of the airborne launched inside the country.

After long discussions, the Soviets finally accepted the proposal of the Romanians and thus, it was decided to conduct the first exclusively Romanian staff command exercise, at the Front echelon, with communications on the ground, for educational purposes, under the leadership of the Romanian Minister of the Armed Forces at that time, Army General Leontin Sălăjan, between May 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 1965, provided in the Joint Action Plan of the UAF HQs.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, which Nicolae Ceaușescu denounced both as a violation of international laws and as an infringement of the principles of mutual non-intervention in internal affairs, considering that the collective defence against external aggression was the only authorized mission of the Warsaw Pact, constituted a turning point in defining Romania's position in the issue of joint manoeuvres with troops and aroused extensive discussions between the Romanian Army leadership and the UAF Command, with maximum quotas in 1969 and 1970.<sup>18</sup>

Following discussions with Marshal I.I. Yakubovsky, UAF commander-in-chief and General S.M. Shtemenko, the chief of staff of the UAF, on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1969 (Annex 3), regarding the organization of a manoeuvre with troops on the territory of Romania in October 1969, and repeated several times, the military leadership<sup>19</sup> of the Romanian Armed Forces requested its cancellation and the development of "*an application for cooperation on the map*", led by the Romanian Minister of the Armed Forces, with the participation of HQs / operative groups from Romania, Bulgaria and USSR, in 1970. The leadership of the UAF HQs did not initially accept the proposal of the Romanian party, considering that the final removal of this exercise/manoeuvre from the plan and its replacement with another one on the map was inconceivable, agreeing only with its postponement. The Soviet generals considered that a precedent had been created and, on the one hand, gave rise to speculation and commentary on the existence of serious cracks within the Treaty, and on the other hand, the other Member States reproached that "*R.S. Romania would have a preferential regime*". Finally, after repeated discussions, this manoeuvre would

be postponed to 1970 and transformed into a command staff exercise, with communication on the ground, with the participation of the Armed Forces of Romania, Bulgaria and the USSR and led by the Minister of the Romanian Armed Forces.

Another contradictory aspect raised by the Romanian side in 1970 and considered by the leadership of the UAF HQs as an increasingly visible negative position on the part of Romanians in a series of inter-allied problems, was the necessity, according to the Romanian legislation, to conclude agreements between the Government of Romania and the governments of the states whose troops/HQs were intended to participate in manoeuvres/exercises, regardless of their nature, on the territory of our country, to be ratified by the competent bodies of each country (Annex 4). With all the initial opposition of the UAF leadership, claiming the non-existence of this request in the UAF Statute, which had been adopted in March 1969, finally, it was agreed that only command staff exercises would be implemented in Romania, situations created exclusively on the map, and the Romanian army no longer participates in manoeuvres with troops on the territory of other states.

Relevant is the reply given by General Shtemenko, the chief of staff of the UAF, on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1970, to Major General Florian Truță, deputy chief of the UAF from the Romanian Army: *"We know that there is a law. It was voted on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1968, in relation to the situation in Czechoslovakia. In the Statute signed in March 1969, it was not mentioned that manoeuvres/exercises can be performed only on the basis of conventions. Laws, laws, but if they were troops, would they ask for laws? Dubcek had his laws, but who asked him?"*<sup>20</sup>

As a result, the allied armies were represented in the exercises carried out on the territory of Romania only by HQs and staffs, all situations being solved exclusively on the map. At the same time, the Romanian Army was represented at the exercises organized by the Treaty in the territory of other states only with groups of generals and officers, HQs and small staffs, which solved the strategic and operative-tactical situations only on the map.

Since it has not participated in manoeuvres with troops on the territory of other states and has not admitted such actions on its territory, Romania has organized, once every two years, a joint exercise, of operative-strategic level, which was on the map. Besides the Romanians, who represented the majority of the ground forces (2 army HQs), the Soviets and the Bulgarians participated with an army HQs, all organized in a Front, completed with operative groups of weapons: aviation, air defence, navy, artillery, engineering troops, chemical protection, etc.<sup>21</sup>

In order to exemplify the principles that were the basis for the planning and organization of the joint command staff exercises, on the map, developed after 1970 on the territory of Romania, it is important to highlight their main characteristics.

Essentially, the same objectives were set as for the manoeuvres with troops on this Theatre of Military Actions: measures for increasing the alert level from peacetime to wartime, for the entry of forces during the foreseen time in the combat status, for the rejection of the aggressor's offensive action and the beginning of the own offensive operations, the consolidation and training of the command structures from all the levels involved in the organization and management of the operations, in accordance with the requirements of the modern battle; development of inter-allied cooperation; testing the campaign plan assumptions; experimenting with new methods in the tactical-operative field; improvement of management and staff work.<sup>22</sup>

The concept of the exercises was elaborated in the form of text and graphics and included the general and specific political-military context in which an (unprovoked) aggression against one of the Romania's allies<sup>23</sup> (Bulgaria in particular) would have occurred and the military elements related to all strategic, operative and tactical situations in order to be solved by the participants, to the combat positions, to succession of forces into the action, to the groupings and re-groupings of troops, to the issues of cooperation and leadership, as well as to the way of securing the links. Very important, the use of weapons of mass destruction by one's own forces was never planned,

but there was the possibility of their use by a hypothetical enemy.<sup>24</sup>

The theme of the planned actions was intended to employ important army, air, air defence and naval forces, in accordance with the requirements of the modern combat concept in all three environments: on the ground, in the air and maritime. In most cases, the action of army forces, equipped with armoured vehicles, was preceded by massive strikes of aviation and tactical-operative missiles on a great depth, and as the air-ground operations unfolded, aviation contributed to the enhancement of the offensive fight rate and to the increasing of the missions' depth or, as the case may be, in cooperation with the air defence, to the strengthening and developing of an active character of the defence. Thus, search-monitoring missions, bombardment and assault actions, launching of the airborne, troops transport and logistics assurance were practiced. Particular interest was also given to the forcing of important watercourses, fighting in fortified positions, on mountainous forest land and/or in localities.<sup>25</sup>

The directions of action of the Romanian Armed Forces during the exercises organized by it were, in general, the three strategic directions, northern Italian to the south-west (until 1966), Greek to the south and Turkish to the south-east or for defence of the Black Sea coastline.

Part of the time leading up to the exercises was for the theoretical training of the participating staffs. Regarding this, the former defence minister, Colonel General (ret.) Constantin Olteanu wrote<sup>26</sup>: "*The participation of the Romanian HQs in the exercises, regardless of their character and the place where they were carried out, was preceded, each time, by a period of intense, theoretical and methodological preparation of the soldiers who were to take part in the action. During this time, based on an indicative bibliography, they carefully studied the combat regulations, papers, studies and articles that dealt with the issues of the future exercise or participated on the presentation of papers and debates regarding the particularities of the Theatre of Military Actions.*" Within these activities, the focus was placed on knowing the characteristics of the terrain, the status

of the itineraries (roads and railways), the status and capacity of the means of communication, the situation of the watercourses that had to be passed or forced, as well as the situation of the fortified areas. Also, the participants were encouraged to present personal opinions and variants regarding the main situations that could appear in the dynamics of the battle and the ways of solving them, as well as forms and methods of inter-arm and inter-allied cooperation. At the same time, major training took place on all the levels participating in the exercise, field reconnaissance was carried out and a special emphasis was placed on the knowledge of the organization, endowment, value and quality of the forces that the probable enemy could use, as well as the mode of action of the enemy.<sup>27</sup>

All the documents needed for the exercises, as well as the methodology to be followed, were elaborated by the Romanian side and agreed with the representatives of the Soviet Army and the Bulgarian Army, as well as with the UAF leadership.

As a rule, the command staff exercises on the map on the territory of Romania were carried out in February-March in the Neptun resort on the Black Sea, not so much for the beauty of the resort, but, especially, because the operation was also aimed at measures on defending the coastline of this sea and the mouths of the Danube.<sup>28</sup>

In addition, the Romanian Armed Forces participated, almost annually, with ships, together with the Soviet and Bulgarian ones, in the so-called "fleet exercises" for the defence of the Romanian and Bulgarian coastline and the rejection of a supposed enemy from the Black Sea or, with anti-aircraft missile troops, with other Member States, in the firing exercises in the Ashuluk area of Soviet Siberia.

In order to have a real picture of the conducting and the results of the exercises that took place in our country, at some moments in their dynamics and on the assessments regularly participated the UAF commander-in-chief and/or the chief of staff, as well as the defence minister from Bulgaria.

In the preparation period or during the exercises carried out on the Romanian territory, in addition to analysing the actual elements of

their conception, the Romanian defence ministers also used the opportunity to dialogue with the UAF leadership on the overall issues of the Military Action Theatre in which the Romanian Army was directly involved. Thus, the main topics addressed by the leadership of the Romanian Army<sup>29</sup> and which aroused a particular interest at the highest level of the political leadership of the Romanian state, referred to the forces intended to act on the Greek and Turkish operational directions, the conduct of the fight by the first and second strategic echelons and the exercising of command at war on this Military Action Theater.<sup>30</sup>

According to the conception of the UAF HQs and the General Staff of the Soviet Army, the second strategic echelon consisted only of Soviet forces, which were to be introduced into the battle, on the territory of Bulgaria, for the development of the in depth offensive and the achievement of the final strategic objectives. The discussions on this subject were advanced in Moscow, in 1983, by the head of the Romanian General Staff, Colonel General Vasile Milea, on the occasion of preparing the command staff exercise since that year from Neptun resort. Following the presentation of the exercise documents, Marshal N. Ogarkov, the chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Army, indicated, in an imperative tone, to change the part of the conception of the exercise that related to the depth of the missions, in the sense that the forces in the offensive, in the first strategic echelon, the majority of the Romanian army, should only advance to a certain alignment, significantly less deep than the one provided in the exercise conception. The intention was that, after the "hard work" by the Romanian forces in the first step, the Soviets would introduce into battle, at the time and place established by them, their own Front, in order to conquer the general strategic objectives they were aiming at. Due to the situation created, it was necessary for Colonel General Constantin Olteanu, the Romanian minister of national defence, to intervene with Marshal Viktor Kulikov, the UAF commander-in-chief, to maintain the initial conception of the exercise, as thought by the Romanian side.<sup>31</sup>

A second important issue discussed by the Romanian Army leadership with the UAF lead-

ership, at the suggestion of Nicolae Ceaușescu, was how to exercise the command at the South-West Military Action Theatre. Whereas the Soviets expected the respective leadership to return in this area, as in the other, to Soviet marshals and generals, who were to be given broad powers, at the same exercise in 1983, Colonel General Olteanu raised this problem to Marshal Kulikov. During these exchanges of views, Marshal Kulikov proposed that the Romanians take over the command on this Theatre of military actions, a proposal that, if accepted, would open the way for other complications. Because these issues were not resolved, it was agreed to continue the exchange of views to clarify these diverging issues.<sup>32</sup>

In this context, another situation that aroused misunderstandings in the Warsaw Treaty, following the events in Czechoslovakia of 1968, was summarized in the way of moving/transporting the Soviet military technique on the Romanian territory or of entering Soviet aircraft in the Romanian airspace, for their participation in the exercises/manoeuvres with troops organized in Bulgaria. After intense discussions between the leadership of the Romanian Army and the UAF leadership of the Treaty, two variants were agreed mainly for the transport of Soviet military technique: at sea, with the help of ships or, when it was not possible, by train, but separate from the participating staffs.

Regarding these aspects, the Colonel General Constantin Olteanu, in dialogue with the journalist Dan Constantin stated: "*Starting from 1968, Romania has not allowed the transit of its territory by troops belonging to other states, with or without armament on them, or the flight of its territory by foreign military aircraft. Obviously, Romania's position has been criticized and it has been urged by the allies, especially by the Soviets, to reverse it.*"<sup>33</sup>

However, there were exceptions to the established rule, determined by the wish of the Romanian head of state, who had the power to approve these situations, to relax, at times, the relations between Romania and the other member states of the Warsaw Treaty, especially with the Soviet Union. Such exceptions were the approvals given for the transit and ensuring the movement of Soviet military columns

through Romania, participating in manoeuvres on the territory of Bulgaria in 1977 and 1989, or the chief of the General Staff of the Bulgarian People's Army request for the passage through Romania of Bulgarian military soldiers, for participation in a manoeuvre on the territory of the USSR, from 10 to 20 May 1969 (Annex 5).

In the second part of the '80s, the political-military leadership in Bucharest refused to engage the Romanian General Staff in joint staff trainings or in various activities, considering that the training of command structures is an exclusive attribute of the national command. Also, the participation with troops of the Romanian Army in manoeuvres was still refused and it was decided only to send operative groups of the army or division staffs for activities exclusively on the map.

In conclusion, no matter how well they were designed and executed, the exercises on the map could not replace the manoeuvres with troops, with their participation on the ground, thus ensuring the training of the military and the building of the commanders and staffs skills to act as close to the real conditions of the battlefield and to be able to check the campaign plan options much more effectively. At the same time, based on the conclusions drawn, they could bring the necessary corrections to the action plans, reduced possibilities in case of the command staff exercises on the map.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, starting from the important role of the exercises and manoeuvres having in the preparation of HQs and troops and from the fact that the Romanian Army had not participated for a long time in manoeuvres with troops under the Warsaw Treaty, in the 1980s the emphasis has been placed on the organization and execution of such activities, apart from the regular exercises/manoeuvres of tactical and operative units and large units, at the level of the entire Romanian Army, led by the Romanian Minister of Defence.

At the same time, in accordance with the objectives of the ninth decade of developing a new strategic orientation, whereby exercises/manoeuvres were noted for their magnitude and complexity, General Constantin Olteanu managed to convince Nicolae Ceaușescu of the usefulness of some exercises/manoeuvres,

which would go conceptually beyond the pre-conception of rejecting the potential aggressor only up to the state border and pursuing it until its defeat or surrender.

### **III. Characteristics of some joint exercises/manoeuvres carried out under the Warsaw Treaty in which the Romanian Armed Forces participated**

In order to exemplify what I wrote in the previous chapter, I considered it necessary to present some characteristics of some representative joint exercises/manoeuvres within the Warsaw Treaty, with the participation of Romanian personnel and/or units.

#### **1. The command staff exercise, Front level, with communication on the ground, for educational purposes, May 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 1965**

The exercise, provided in the UAF Joint Measures Plan, was carried out on the Romanian territory, only with the participation of the Romanian Armed Forces – the Exercise Staff<sup>35</sup> and the Front HQs consisting of 2 Armies, 1 Army Corps, 1 Air Corps, as well as units and large units planned to be set up for mobilization – and was led by the Romanian Minister of the Armed Forces, General Leontin Sălăjan.

With the theme "*Organization and planning of the offensive operation by the front, at the same time with the execution of the army and front counter-attacks and carrying out combat actions without and with the use of weapons of mass destruction*", the exercise was designed by the Romanian General Staff and approved by the leadership of Warsaw Treaty.

The concept of this exercise, presented widely by Colonel General Constantin Olteanu and his collaborators<sup>36</sup>, stipulated the aggression by the imperialist states on the theatres of European military actions, following the political and economic failures and the intensification of the arms race. After violating the neutrality of Austria and Yugoslavia, NATO troops entered central and south-eastern Europe, including Romania. Their rhythm of advance was slowed by the eastern troops, who went on the offensive in some directions.

Under these conditions, the Romanian Front was given the mission to reject the enemy groups of forces penetrated in Transylvania and Oltenia and, after 5 days, to move to counter-offensive, in order to destroy, in cooperation with the 2 Fronts left and right, the operational reserves from the depth of the enemy positions. Thus, the conditions favourable to the exit with the main forces on the territory of Hungary, west of the Danube and to execute a new operation on the north-Italian direction were created.

Within this general conception, the effects of their own nuclear strikes were simulated, in response to the enemy's nuclear strikes, to repel their forces beyond the national border.

After an operational jump, the troops of the Romanian Front organized a new offensive for the destruction of 2 new NATO Army Groups, which were fighting a new combat alignment and subsequently its development to the north and central Italy. During this time, the two fronts located on the flanks had the mission to develop the offensive towards Leipzig, respectively for the exit with the main forces on the northeast coast of the Adriatic Sea and the destruction of the enemy that resisted in the Bosnian Mountains and in the Split district.

After the ending of the exercise, some assessments were made and conclusions were drawn, of which the most relevant were<sup>37</sup>:

- the group of Soviet generals, participants as observers, appreciated that the exercise was useful, and the planning corresponded to the conception of that time and the particularities of conducting combat actions on the South-West theatre of operations;

- they also pointed out many problems that were not sufficiently clarified, especially regarding the use in combat of nuclear weapons, the protection of troops against them, the use in combat of some categories of troops, which Romania did not have at its disposal for that moment;

- the exercise, the first one on the Romanian front level, far exceeded the real possibilities of action of the Romanian Armed Forces, the enemy being "defeated" with too much easiness, in a defence and offensive strip whose length ranged between 450 and 250 km, the depth being even more impressive, from

Craiova and Braşov, to Budapest, Vienna and beyond Rome.

This exercise constituted the defining element by which, starting with 1966, the UAF HQs has definitively established the direction of action of the Romanian Armed Forces to the south, for blocking the direction of Greek operations, a measure accepted by the political and military authorities in Bucharest, who, however, have notified the difficult situation in which the country would have been placed in case of attack on the other directions. Finally, a compromise was reached and Romania decided to take appropriate measures to also defend the country at other possible directions of attack of the enemy, to avoid any surprise, especially after the invasion of the "allies" in 1968 in Czechoslovakia.<sup>38</sup>

## **2. The command staff exercise, on the map, "SOIUZ<sup>39</sup>-73", carried out on the Romanian territory, February 12<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1973<sup>40</sup>**

The exercise, attended by about 400 generals and officers from Romania, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union, of which about 100 were Romanians, was conducted on the territory of Romania, in Neptun resort and was led by Soviet Marshall Ivan I. Yakubovsky, the UAF commander-in-chief.

The theme of the exercise, approved by Nicolae Ceauşescu in January 1973, was "*Deployment of the Allied Troops Groups on the Military Action Theatre with simultaneous rejection of enemy aggression. Conducting the offensive operation of the Front and combat actions of the Maritime Forces and Anti-Air Defence Troops of the Warsaw Treaty States*".

According to the exercise's concept<sup>41</sup> (Annex 6), the forces of the NATO South Army Group, consisting of large units of the Greek and Turkish Armed Forces<sup>42</sup>, supported by one independent aviation corps, attacked Bulgaria and reached an alignment south of Sofia, at the same time as NATO's air-naval forces engaged the battle in the Black Sea, 150 miles east of Constanta, and the launching of an airborne north of Burgas, Bulgaria.

Within the exercise, the large units<sup>43</sup> of the Romanian Army, set up in one Front, together with 2 Soviet armies, situated on the flanks,

passed the Danube river and concentrated forces south of it, under the conditions of the enemy's use of the weapons of mass destruction. After regrouping, the Romanian and Soviet forces on the left flank began to advance in the south-southeast direction, and the first, supported by a Romanian airborne regiment, to try to create a bridgehead south of the Dardanelles Strait, and the Soviets, together with an airborne division, would reject Turkish forces west of Istanbul. At the same time, in the Black Sea, two air-naval battles had to be engaged northeast and east of Istanbul.

On the right flank of the Romanian Army, a Bulgarian Front, in cooperation with the Soviets, rejected the offensive actions of the Greek forces, liberated the Bulgarian territory and reached the Aegean coast.

The exercise highlighted some important elements regarding the way of thinking and action in the Warsaw Treaty<sup>44</sup>:

- for the first time since the Alliance was set up, the UAF HQs provided that the Romanian Front should act on the Turkish operational direction, forcing the Dardanelles Strait (the Romanian Army had been engaged only on the North-Italian operational directions, until 1966, and later on Greek);
- the Soviet military leaders were concerned about the rapid conquest of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits in case of starting a war between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization;
- it's easy to observe the disposal of the Romanian forces between two Soviet armies, during the joint exercises, which can be explained if we take into account the problems that the Romanian authorities created after the events of August 1968, in Czechoslovakia.

### **3. The manoeuvre with troops, "SCUT-82", carried out on the Bulgarian territory, September 25<sup>th</sup> - October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1982**

In this manoeuvre, led by the Minister of the Bulgarian Armed Forces, Army General Dobri Dzhurov, participated forces and assets from all the member states of the Warsaw Pact, except Romania, which sent only a delegation of generals and officers, led by the Minister of National Defence and one small Division HQs, in the manoeuvre's staff.

In the concept of the manoeuvre<sup>45</sup>, the concentration of troops and HQs of the Soviet army in the southwestern Tolbuhin area was planned, and those of other allied armies 80 km south of Ruse. It was also planned to set up a Coalition Front with a multinational composition, the operative teams of the Romanian army HQs being part of a Romanian Front.

The strategic and operative-tactical objectives of this manoeuvre aimed at achieving the cohesion of the HQs and the large allied units, improving the cooperation between the categories of armed forces, under the conditions of the use of maritime assault and airborne. A major objective was represented by the radio-electronic side of the armed struggle.

The manoeuvre also included a powerful Soviet-Polish airborne, the Soviets being launched into the parachute-fighting machine from IL-76 aircraft, while the Poles launched, according to the classical method, a battalion that flew over the Romanian territory.

The manoeuvre raised particular problems for the Romanian side, regarding the acceptance or not of the transit and the flyover of the national territory by the troops<sup>46</sup> (having on their armament, ammunition and fighting technique) from the armies of the USSR, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and the GDR.

The Romanian minister of national defence proposed to Nicolae Ceaușescu, and he accepted, to apply for transit and flight requests only on the basis of conventions concluded between the Romanian Government and the government of each country in accordance with the Romanian regulations in force. The Allies ignored the request, sending only requests to military bodies and not from government to government. As a result, the Romanian response was negative and, in the end, Nicolae Ceaușescu only approved the flyover of the Polish troops (a paratroopers' battalion), without the representatives of the other armies reacting in any way.

During the preparatory period, according to the entrusted mandate, Lieutenant General Constantin Olteanu, the Minister of National Defence, explained to Marshal Viktor Kulikov, the UAF Commander-in-Chief, and to the Army General Dobri Dzhurov, the Bulgarian Minister of Defence, that, due to its size, the

manoeuvre was not indicated to take place, because it had a profound political character, and was developed in an area where the party and state leaders carried out constructive actions for the development of friendship and partnership, for the implementation of an area of international peace and cooperation.

The Soviet marshal and the Bulgarian general replied that the problems of the manoeuvre had already been discussed in the Political Bureau of the Bulgarian Communist Party, with the general secretaries of the communist parties from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Poland agreeing with it.

Marshal Kulikov also expressed his dissatisfaction with the Romanians' denial of the transit of the national territory, without the approval of the Grand National Assembly<sup>47</sup>, and of the conclusion of intergovernmental conventions. He also stated that he had to inform about these difficulties he was facing from the Romanian side and that the manoeuvre, regardless of these difficulties, would be carried out at the highest level.

\* \* \*

During the three decades of existence of the Warsaw Treaty, Romania adopted a distinct position within it, manifesting a hostile attitude whenever the arrangements were made or actions that were contrary to the principle of national sovereignty were taking place. One of the aspects that Romania considered to be an unpermitted interference in the national sovereignty was that, at war, the operational leadership of UAF was to be the responsibility of the General Staff of the USSR Army, while the UAF HQs was to play only its supporting role.

The decision regarding the participation of the Romanian Armed Forces in the common activities organized by the UAF HQs of the Warsaw Treaty was included in the same line, whether these were joint exercises and manoeuvres or working meetings and consultations of the management personnel. It has been tried, as far as possible, through a diplomatic approach to the different situations that have arisen, to impose on its partners, and especially on the Soviets, its own policy regarding the training of the armed forces for the defence of the national territory.

The subject addressed in the present work is a very interesting one for knowing one of the controversial periods of the Romania's history, and, through a more thorough documentation of the documents existing in the archives, as they will become fully accessible for research, it can be developed and aspects that could not be elucidated so far can be presented.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The **Warsaw Pact** or **Treaty**, formally known as the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance*, was a military alliance of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Eastern Bloc, who wanted to defend themselves against the threat they perceived from the NATO alliance (founded in 1949). The creation of the Warsaw Pact was hastened by NATO integration of "remilitarized" West Germany, through the ratification by the Western countries of the London and Paris Agreements. The Warsaw Treaty was initiated by Nikita Khrushchev in 1955 and was signed in Warsaw on May 14, 1955 by all communist states of Eastern Europe – Albania (officially withdrawn from the Pact due to ideological differences, in 1968), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, Romania, Hungary and USSR – except for Yugoslavia. The pact has ceased to exist on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1991 and was officially dissolved at the Prague meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1991. [https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pactul\\_de\\_la\\_Varsovia](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pactul_de_la_Varsovia), accessed on 22.01.2019.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Jones, Final Report to National Council for Soviet and European research "Soviet Military Doctrine and Warsaw Pact Exercises", pp.1, <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceer/0000-621-1-Jones.pdf>, accessed on 16.01.2019.

<sup>3</sup> The main structures to ensure the functioning of the Alliance were the following: the Political Advisory Committee, **the HQs of the United Armed Forces, the General Staff of the United Armed Forces** and the United Secretariat of the Treaty, <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/general/articol/10-lucruri-de-stiut-despre-pactul-de-la-varsovia>, accessed on 19.04.2019.

<sup>4</sup> According to the volume "Boevoe sodruzhestvo (Combat Community)", edited by the commander-in-chief of the UAF HQs, Marshal I.I. Yakubovsky, before 1961, joint tactical exercises took place, and two such exercises were identified by the researcher, Christopher Jones, both in bilateral format. Thus, in **August 1957**, Soviet and East German troops carried out a joint exercise, while Marshall Grechko was still the commander of Soviet troops in East Germany, and during **July 18<sup>th</sup>**

– August 8th, 1958, Soviet Air Force and Army, Air Force and Maritime Bulgarian forces conducted a joint exercise in Bulgaria under the command of Soviet Marshal (Air Force) N.S. Skripko. <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/0000-621-1-Jones.pdf>, accessed on 16.01.2019.

<sup>5</sup> I.I. Yakubovsky, “*Boevoe sodruzhestvo (Comunitatea de luptă)*”, pp.151, quoted from Christopher Jones, in the work “*Soviet Military Doctrine and Warsaw Pact Exercises*”, <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/0000-621-1-Jones.pdf>, accessed on 16.01.2019.

<sup>6</sup> Jones, *Final Report* (see note 2), Annex no.1 <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceeer/0000-621-1-Jones.pdf>, Colonel General (ret.) PhD Constantin Olteanu, colonel (ret.) Alesandru Duțu, major general (ret.) Constantin Antip, “*România și Tratatul de la Varșovia. Istoric. Mărturii. Documente. Cronologie*”, pp. 89-106, Publishing House *Pro Historia*, Bucharest 2005, Colonel General (ret.) PhD Constantin Olteanu, “*O viață de om: dialog cu jurnalistul Dan Constantin*”, pp. 274-282, Publishing House *Niculescu*, Bucharest 2012, and Petre Opreș, “*Aplicații pe Teatrul de acțiuni militare de Sud-Vest al Organizației Tratatului de la Varșovia (1973-1989)*”, January 2019, <http://www.contributors.ro/sinteze/aplicatii-pe-teatrul-de-actiuni-militare-de-sud-vest-al-organizatiei-tratatului-de-la-varsovia-1973-1989/>.

<sup>7</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 90.

<sup>8</sup> Yakubovsky (see note 5), pp. 160.

<sup>9</sup> Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland and Hungary.

<sup>10</sup> The commanders could not be identified in all the exercises/manoeuvres carried out under the Warsaw Pact.

<sup>11</sup> Jones, *Final Report* (see note 2), pp. 21-24.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

<sup>14</sup> From Annex 1 it appears that the last manoeuvre with troops on the territory of Romania took place in the autumn of 1963.

<sup>15</sup> Soviet version of Army Groups.

<sup>16</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 92.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>19</sup> The minister of Romanian armed forces, colonel general Ion Ioniță and the Chief of General Staff, colonel general Ion Gheorghe.

<sup>20</sup> The Romanian National Archives, Fund of Archive “Tratatul de la Varșovia (MApN)” – File 48/1970, pp. 26 (Report no. M00702/11.02.1970 to President Nicolae Ceaușescu from minister of Romanian armed forces, colonel general Ion Ioniță).

<sup>21</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 96.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97.

<sup>23</sup> The governments of these states had to request the military assistance, in accordance with the provisions of Art. 4 of the document establishing the Warsaw Treaty.

<sup>24</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 96-97.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98.

<sup>29</sup> Represented by army general Ion Ioniță, colonel general Ion Coman and colonel general Constantin Olteanu, the ministers of defence in the period of 1966-1985.

<sup>30</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 98-99.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 99.

<sup>33</sup> Olteanu, *O viață de om* (see note 6), pp. 275.

<sup>34</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 99-100.

<sup>35</sup> He worked at the same time in the role of Supreme Command (Allies) and the Tisza Army Group (enemy).

<sup>36</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 92-93.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 93.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 93.

<sup>39</sup> In translation the Union.

<sup>40</sup> Opreș, *Aplicații* (see note 6), <http://www.contributors.ro/sinteze/aplicatii-pe-teatrul-de-actiuni-militare-de-sud-vest-al-organizatiei-tratatului-de-la-varsovia-1973-1989/>, accessed on 15.04.2019.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Each with one army organised into 3 army corps and one independent army corps.

<sup>43</sup> 10 divisions, of which 2 of tanks.

<sup>44</sup> Opreș, *Aplicații* (see note 6).

<sup>45</sup> Olteanu and others, *Romania* (see note 6), pp. 103-105.

<sup>46</sup> 82 Soviet trains, 14 Hungarian trains, 5 Czechoslovak trains, 10 East-German trains and 8 Polish airplanes, carrying 28,000 soldiers, 300 tanks, 400 infantry fighting machines, 300 armoured amphibious carriers, 300 cannons and throwers, 122 fighter jets, 66 helicopters and over 4,000 different vehicles.

<sup>47</sup> **The Great National Assembly** was the unicameral legislative body of the Romanian People's Republic (Socialist Romania) between 1947-1989, [https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marea\\_Adunare\\_Națională](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marea_Adunare_Națională), accessed on 09.05.2019.

## Chronology of common exercises/manoeuvres of the United Armed Forces under the Warsaw Pact

Year	Date	Name	Type of exercise / manoeuvre	Location	Participants	Commander	Characteristics
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
1961	OCT-NOV	STORM / BURIA	with troops	GDR, POL, CSR west USSR	GDR, POL, CSR, USSR	A.A. Grechko / USSR	- during the Berlin crisis - land, air and naval forces, airborne troops
	APR, 10 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	HUN, and partial ROU	Gp.Tr. „SOUTH” HUN, ROU, USSR	A.A. Grechko / USSR	- countering the offensive actions of NATO troops deployed in the southern area of the Federal Republic of Germany - using of atomic weapon - creating conditions for offensive to Nord Italy - forcing the Danube river - simultaneous with the command staff exercise
1962	SEP		demonstrating with troops	HUN	HUN, USSR	no date	- land, air, naval forces
	OCT, 01 <sup>st</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup>	BALTIC-ODER	with troops	POL, and partial GDR	POL, GDR, USSR	M. Spychalski / POL	
1963	OCT, 19 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	L. Sălăjan / ROU	- land forces supporting by aircraft
	JUN, 01 <sup>st</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	no date	- countering the offensive actions of Greek and Turkish troops - advancing to Ankara to forcible straits
	SEP, 09 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>	QUARTET	with troops	GDR	GDR, POL, CSR, USSR	H. Hoffman / GDR	- 40,000 soldiers - 700 tanks, 8300 armoured vehicles, 500 artillery means, 300 aircraft, airborne troops - nuclear simulation
	fall		with troops	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	L. Sălăjan / ROU	
	JUN		command staff	CSR	CSR, GDR, USSR	no date	
1964	JUL, 07 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	CSR	CSR, USSR	B. Lomsky / CSR	
	SEP, 15 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	D. Dzhurov / BUL	- naval forces, airborne troops - land forces ? - land and air forces - airborne troops
1965	APR, 05 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup>			GDR	GDR, USSR	no date	
	MAY, 20 <sup>th</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	ROU	ROU	L. Sălăjan / ROU	- the first front level exercise with exclusive participation of ROU Armed Forces - with communication on the ground

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USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
1966	OCT, 16 <sup>th</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup>	OCTOBER STORM	with troops	GDR <sup>1</sup>	GDR, POL, CSR, USSR	P.K. Koshevoy / USSR	- improving the „cooperation of allied troops and staffs for actions in different combat conditions“ - 50.000 soldiers - 800 tanks, 1000 armoured vehicles, 5000 motorized vehicles, 400 aircraft - naval and air forces
	JUL, 20 <sup>th</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>			Baltic Sea	GDR, POL, USSR	no date	- more than 20 administrative organs - formations and special units + airborne forces (approx. 850km length)
	SEP, 20 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	VLTAVA	with troops	CSR	CSR, HUN, GDR, USSR	B. Lomsky / CSR	- served as a preparation for the 1968 operative exercises * ROU - 1 mechanized division (small HQs, 1 mechanized regiment, division units and tanks company), 2 engineering regiments, 1 ships group, other subunits - USSR - 1 mechanized large unit, 2 engineering regiments, part of river ships brigade
	OCT, 26 <sup>th</sup> - NOV, 03 <sup>rd</sup>		command staff	ROU	ROU, USSR	L. Salajan / ROU	
1967	MAY, 27 <sup>th</sup> - JUN, 05 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	POL, northern GDR	GDR, POL, USSR	M. Spychalski / POL	
	JUN, 14 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>	MANEUVER	with troops	HUN, CSR	HUN, CSR, USSR	II. Yakubovsky / USSR	- all categories of forces
	AUG, 20 <sup>th</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>	RODOPY	with troops	BUL, Black Sea	BUL, USSR, ROU	D. Dzhuurov / BUL	- land, air and naval forces - airborne troops * ROU – with 1 division HQs, on the map
	AUG OCT	FLORETT ODER		POL	GDR, USSR	no date	
1968	MAY, 20 <sup>th</sup> - JUN, 03 <sup>rd</sup>	SOUND	with troops	GDR, POL, CSR, USSR	GDR, POL, CSR, HUN, USSR	no date	- during the Czechoslovakia crisis * ROU – only in staff (1 division HQs)
	JUN, 20 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	SHUMAVA	command staff	GDR, POL, CSR, USSR	GDR, POL, CSR, HUN, USSR	II. Yakubovsky / USSR	- more than 30 administrative organs - communication and logistic units, special troops - aircraft carrying nuclear bombs * ROU – only in staff, as a guest

<sup>1</sup> The real purpose was to demonstrate the full unity of the Warsaw Pact states and to strengthen the trust of the GDR population that the United Armed Forces were able to defend it against the “revanchist plans of West German militarism”.

Year	Date	Name	Type of exercise / manoeuvre	Location	Participants	Commander	Characteristics
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
	JUL, 05 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>	SEVER	with troops (by sea)	Northern Atlantic, Norwegian Sea, Barents Sea, Baltic Sea	POL, GDR, USSR	A.S. Gorshkov / USSR	- naval forces
	JUL - AUG	SKY SHIELD	command staff	WTO states		no date	- anti-aircraft forces
	JUL, 24 <sup>th</sup> - AUG, 09 <sup>th</sup>	NIEMEN (NEMAN)	with troops	GDR, POL, USSR	GDR, POL, USSR	S.S. Mariakhin / USSR	- logistic exercise
	AUG, 11 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	West Ukraine, GDR, POL	USSR, GDR, POL	S.M. Shtemenko / USSR	- communication exercise - land forces, communication units - establishing the final combat positions for a future aggression, as well as for rejecting a possible military reaction from NATO
	AUG 17 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	HUN	HUN, USSR	no date	- communication units
1968	AUG, 20 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>		with troops	CSR	BUL, HUN, GDR, POL, USSR	I.G. Pavlovski / USSR	- <b>The Invasion Force:</b> land and air forces, airborne troops
	MAR, 01 <sup>st</sup> -07 <sup>th</sup>			GDR	GDR, USSR	L.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	
	MAR, 25 <sup>th</sup> - APR, 01 <sup>st</sup>		operative on the map	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	L.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	- operative groups / naval forces, anti-aircraft troops
1969	MAR, 30 <sup>th</sup> - APR, 04 <sup>th</sup>	SPRING 69		POL, GDR, CSR	POL, GDR, CSR, USSR	B. Chocho / POL	- land forces, communication troops
	APR, 04 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	ZENIT 69		POL, HUN, CSR, USSR	POL, HUN, CSR, USSR	Batitski / USSR	- air forces, anti-aircraft troops
	MAY, 14 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>			USSR	USSR, BUL, HUN	probably USSR	- land forces * ROU (?)
1969	JUL, 04 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	POL	POL, GDR, USSR	S.M. Shtemenko / USSR	- logistic forces
	JUL, 23 <sup>rd</sup> - AUG, 02 <sup>nd</sup>			POL, CSR, USSR	POL, CSR, USSR	P.S. Kutakov / USSR	- air forces
	AUG, 10 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	West CSR	CSR, USSR	A.M. Matorov / USSR	
	SEP, 21 <sup>st</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>	ODER-NEISSE	with troops	POL, Baltic Sea	POL, GDR, CSR, USSR	W. Jaruzelski / POL	- identified as the biggest exercise that took place until that time - land, air and naval forces - simulation of nuclear weapons

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USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
	first half of OCT		command staff	ROU, BUL	ROU, BUL, HUN, USSR	I. Ioniță / ROU	* ROU - 2 mechanized divisions (tanks) + aviation units - the other – each 1 infantry division + 1 tanks brigade and aviation units (BUL), engineering and aviation units (USSR)
	OCT, 16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	POL, GDR, CSR west USSR	POL, GDR, CSR, USSR	no date	- Land forces HQs POL, GDR, CSR - Air forces HQs USSR
	JUN		command staff	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	D. Dzhurov / BUL	- with communication on the ground * ROU - 1 mechanized division HQs
	JUL, 01 <sup>st</sup> -09 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	HUN	HUN, BUL, USSR	I.I. Iakubovski / USSR	- land and air forces, antiaircraft troops staff * ROU refused the participation (telegram 0026/22.02.1970)
1970	JUL, 13 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup>	ZENIT 70	command staff	WTO states	WTO states	P.F. Batitski / USSR	- antiaircraft exercise
	AUG, 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>			CSR	CSR, USSR	V. Valo / CSR	- land forces
	OCT, 12 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup>	BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS 70	with troops	GDR	GDR, BUL, CSR, POL, HUN, USSR	H. Hoffman / GDR	- the biggest manoeuvre until then - land, air and naval forces GDR, POL, USSR - local defence units GDR - militia workers GDR * ROU - 1 small division HQs (300 soldiers) in staff
	MAR, 22 <sup>nd</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>		tactical-operative	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	I. Ioniță / ROU	* ROU - operative groups / Front, 2 army, air defence and navy - BUL, USSR - each 1 operative group / army HQs (50 troops each)
1971	JUN, 24 <sup>th</sup> – JUL, 02 <sup>nd</sup>		command staff	GDR, CSR	WTO Staff GDR, CSR, USSR	I.I. Yakubovsky / USSR	
	JUL, 05 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	CSR, POL	CSR, POL, USSR	Dzur / CSR	- air force, antiaircraft troops - land forces (?)
	JUL, 12 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	VISLA-ELBE 71	command staff	GDR, POL	WTO Staff GDR, POL, USSR	S.M. Shtemenko / USSR	
	AUG, 02 <sup>nd</sup> -05 <sup>th</sup>	OPAL 71	with troops	CSR, HUN	CSR, HUN, USSR	L. Czinege / HUN	- land forces - with airborne and maritime assault, with combat firing and aviation bombardment * ROU – 1 mechanized brigade HQs with a small staff, 1 operative group / navy
1971	AUG, 25 <sup>th</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup>		tactic-operative	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	D. Dzhurov / BUL	
	SEP, 14 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	GDR	GDR, POL, USSR	H. Hoffman / GDR	

Year	Date	Name	Type of exercise / manoeuvre	Location	Participants	Commander	Characteristics
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
1972	FEB		command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	no date	
	FEB, 28 <sup>th</sup> - MAR, 04 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	POL	WTO Staff POL, GDR, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	
	MAR, 21 <sup>st</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	D. Dzshurov / BUL	- with communication means on the ground * ROU - 1 operative group / army HQs
	APR, 18 <sup>th</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup>		with troops	Black Sea	WTO Staff BUL, ROU, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy i / USSR	- naval forces * ROU - 1 operative group / navy
1972	SEP, 04 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	SHIELD 72	with troops	CSR	WTO Staff CSR, GDR, POL, HUN, USSR	Dzur / CSR	- land and air forces, antiaircraft troops - about the same size as ODER-NEISSE and BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS exercises
	OCT		command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	I. Ioniță / ROU	* ROU - 1 army HQs + 2-3 division HQs + 1 operative group / air defence - BUL, USSR - 1 operative group each / infantry division
	FEB, 12 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	SOIUZ 73	command staff	ROU	WTO Staff ROU, BUL, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	- operative groups / Front HQs, air defence and navy from all the 3 states - approx. 400 generals and officers from the 3 states (100 Romanians)
1973	JUN, 26 <sup>th</sup> - JUL, 05 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	GDR, POL	GDR, POL, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	
	summer		with troops	Carpathian military district / USSR	USSR, BUL, HUN	N.B. Abshin / USSR	- 1 land forces regiment - each state
	SEP, 19 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup>	VERTES	with troops	HUN	HUN, USSR	no date	
1974	FEB, 17 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup>		command staff	ROU	ROU, USSR	no date	* ROU - 1 army HQs + 2-3 division HQs + 1 missiles brigade + 1 operative group / air defence division - USSR - 1 operative group / infantry division
	MAY, 14 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	HUN, CSR	HUN, CSR, USSR	no date	
	JUN, 04 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	BUL, ROU	BUL, ROU, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy / USSR	- staffs / logistic forces * on the ROU territory only on the map
	JUN, 17 <sup>th</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup>	SUMMER 74	with troops	west POL	POL, USSR	W. Jaruzelski / POL	
	SEP, 04 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	Baltic Sea	GDR, POL, USSR	I.I. Yakubovskiy i / USSR	- staffs / naval forces - naval flotillas

Year	Date	Name	Type of exercise / manoeuvre	Location	Participants	Commander	Characteristics
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
1975	MAR, 17 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup>		command staff	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	no date	* ROU – only on the map with 1 operative group / division
	APR, 19 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>OLIMP 75</b>	command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	I. Ioniță / ROU	- Front exercise, on 2 echelons * ROU - operative groups / Front HQs, 2 armies, air defence, military aviation, navy
	MAR, 01 <sup>st</sup> -06 <sup>th</sup>		command staff	ROU	ROU, USSR	no date	* ROU - 1 army HQs + staffs / 2 divisions + 1 missiles brigade
1976	MAR, 24 <sup>th</sup> -27 <sup>th</sup>		with troops	BUL	BUL, USSR	no date	- USSR - 1 operative group / infantry division (25-30 troops) + 1 operative group in exercise's command
	SEP, 09 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SCUT-76</b>	with troops	POL	POL, GDR, CSR, USSR	W. Jaruzelski / POL	- 35,000 soldiers
	OCT, 18 <sup>th</sup>			HUN	HUN, USSR	no date	- 18,000 soldiers
1977	FEB, 14 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>CALLATIS 77</b>	command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	V.G. Kulikov / USSR	* ROU - 1 Front HQs + 1-2 army HQs + operative groups / air defense, military aviation, navy
	JUL		with troops	Baltic Sea	POL, GDR, USSR	V.G. Kulikov / USSR	- BUL, USSR - 1 operative group each / army HQs - staffs / naval forces - naval flotillas
	MAR, 10 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>SOIUZ 78</b>	command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	V.G. Kulikov / USSR	- 1 group operative each / Front HQs, 1 army, air defence, military aviation, navy
1979	FEB, 02 <sup>nd</sup> -07 <sup>th</sup>	<b>FRIENDSHIP 79</b>	with troops	CSR	CSR, USSR	no date	- 26,000 soldiers
	MAR, 12 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>SHIELD 79</b>	with troops	HUN	HUN, BUL, CSR, USSR	L. Czienege / HUN	- less than 25,000 soldiers * ROU - only with staff personnel (without troops)
	FEB-MAR the second half of JUN	<b>SOIUZ 80</b> <b>GRANIT 80</b>	command staff with troops	BUL WTO states	BUL, ROU, USSR WTO states	V.G. Kulikov / USSR Air defence troops Commanders	* ROU – only on the map - 1 Front HQs, 1 army, operative groups - The unique anti-aircraft system of the Treaty = Air defense troops and Air forces
1980	AUG, 23 <sup>rd</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>DUNA 80</b>	with troops	HUN	HUN, USSR	no date	- 18,000 soldiers
	SEP, 04 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS 80 + SCUT 80</b>	with troops	GDR	WTO states	H. Hoffman / GDR	- 40,000 soldiers - one of the most comprehensive manoeuvre of the Warsaw Treaty * ROU – one delegation in the manoeuvre staff (1 staff / division + regiment)

Year	Date	Name	Type of exercise / manoeuvre	Location	Participants	Commander	Characteristics
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Rep., GDR = German Democratic Rep., CSR = Czechoslovak Socialist Rep., POL = Polish Popular Rep., BUL = Bulgarian Popular Rep., HUN = Hungarian Popular Rep., ROU = Romanian Popular/Socialist Rep.							
1981	MAR, 06 <sup>th</sup> -11 <sup>th</sup>	TOMIS 81	command staff	ROU	ROU, BUL, USSR	C. Olteanu / ROU	- delegations from the other states were invited
	SEP, 04 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	WEST 81	with troops	Belarus, Baltic Sea	USSR	no date	- 28,000 soldiers
1982	SEP, 25 <sup>th</sup> - OCT, 01 <sup>st</sup>	SHIELD 82	with troops	BUL	WTO states (-ROU)	D. Dzhuurov / BUL	- 300 tanks, 400 infantry fighter vehicles, 300 armoured amphibious vehicles, 300 guns and throwers, 122 fighter aircraft, 66 helicopters, 4000 vehicles * ROU – one group of generals/officers and 1 division HQs in maneuver staff
1983	APR, 04 <sup>th</sup> -09 <sup>th</sup>	CALLATIS 83	command staff	ROU, BUL, west USSR Black Sea	ROU, BUL, USSR	C. Olteanu / ROU	* ROU - 1 Front HQs (120 troops), 2 army HQs (65 troops each), 1 operative group / air defense, military aviation, navy (20 troops each) - BUL, USSR – 1 operative group (army HQs) each
1984	MAR, 12 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup>	SOIUZ 84	command staff	BUL, HUN, ROU	BUL, HUN, ROU, USSR	V.G. Kulikov / USSR	
	SEP	SHIELD 84	operational-strategic	CSR	CSR + ..... ROU	no date	* ROU - 1 delegation in exercise staff (1 small division HQs)
1985	MAR, 08 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup>	TOMIS 85	command staff	ROU	BUL, ROU, USSR	no date	* ROU - 2 army HQs, 1 division HQs, 1 tactic-operative missiles brigade, 1 anti-aircraft missiles regiment - BUL and USSR – 1 operative group (army HQs) each
1989	MAI, 22 <sup>nd</sup> -26 <sup>th</sup>	VLTAVA 89	command staff	CSR	CSR, URSS, ...	no date	
	JUN, 04 <sup>th</sup> -09 <sup>th</sup>	BALKAN 89	with troops	BUL	BUL, ROU, USSR	no date	* ROU - o operative group from the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Army (85 officers and NCOs, 24 conscripts) and 34 staff special vehicles and transport vehicles

Source: Christopher Jones, Final Report to National Council for Soviet and European research “Soviet Military Doctrine and Warsaw Pact Exercises” (Annex no. 1) <https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceer/0000-621-1-Jones.pdf>, Colonel General (ret.) PhD Constantin Olteanu, Colonel (ret.) Alesandru Duțu, Major General (ret.) Constantin Antip, “România și Tratatul de la Varșovia. Istoric. Mărturie. Documente. Cronologie.” pp. 89-106, Publishing House Pro Historia, Bucharest 2005, Colonel General (ret.) PhD Constantin Olteanu, “O viață de om: dialog cu jurnalistul Dan Constantin”, pp. 274-282, Publishing House Niculescu, Bucharest 2012, Petre Opreș, “Aplicații pe Teatrul de acțiuni militare de Sud-Vest al Organizației Tratatului de la Varșovia (1973-1989)”, January 2019, <http://www.contributors.ro/sinteze/aplicatii-pe-teatrul-de-acțiuni-militare-de-sud-vest-al-organizației-tratatului-de-la-varșovia-1973-1989/> and The Romanian National Archives, Fund of Archive “Tratatul de la Varșovia (MAPN)” – File no. 25/1969

Directive on the results of the operational and combat training of the UAF of the Warsaw Treaty states for the winter period and the tasks for the summer training period of 1969

Anexă la nr. P. I. 0062/1969

STRICT-SECRET

Exemplarul nr. 2

Anexă la nr. M. 007941  
Ziua 48 luna 06 1969.

Anexă la nr. C. 1100239  
18 Sept 1969

D I R E C T I V A

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privind rezultatele pregătirii operative și de luptă a Forțelor Armate Unite ale statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia pentru perioada de iarnă și sarcinile pentru perioada instrucției de vară a anului 1969

Nr.0069/2

28 mai 1969

În perioada de iarnă a anului de instrucție 1969, statele majore și trupele, destinate în componerea Forțelor Armate Unite, executând sarcinile Comitetelor Centrale ale partidelor comuniste (socialiste) și muncitorești și a guvernelor, precum și directivele Comandantului Suprem al Forțelor Armate Unite și ordinele Miniștrilor Apărării țărilor Tratatului de la Varșovia, au continuat să-și ridice cu perseverență pregătirea de luptă și de mobilizare.

În conformitate cu planurile de măsuri privind pregătirea de luptă și operativă din Forțele Armate Unite ale statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia, sub conducerea Comandamentului Unificat, miniștrilor apărării, șefilor Marilor (principalelor) state majore, locțiitorilor miniștrilor apărării, în perioada instrucției de iarnă au fost executate toate activitățile planificate: aplicații, jocuri de război, convocări și consfătuiri. Toate aceste activități s-au desfășurat atât în comun cât și separat după planurile Comandamentelor Naționale.

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Cele mai importante dintre acestea, care au fost executate pînă la 25 mai a.c., sînt :

Convocarea tactico-operativă a cadrelor de conducere a armatelor țărilor Tratatului de la Varșovia, desfășurată în Republica Democrată Germană. La convocare au fost studiate problemele principale privitoare la ducerea operațiilor moderne pe teatrele acțiunilor de luptă, doctrinele militare ale principalelor state capitaliste și metodele ducerii de către acestea a războiului psihologic împotriva țărilor din comunitatea socialistă. În afară de aceasta, participanții la convocare au fost informați asupra organizării și executării aplicațiilor tactice și tragerilor de luptă cu diferite tipuri de armament. Toate acestea au permis să se lărgescă orizontul tactic-operativ al participanților la convocare, să se perfecționeze metodică pregătirii statelor majore și a trupelor.

Jocul operativ de război pe hartă pe direcția sud-vest cu participarea Statelor majore operative ale Republicii Populare Bulgaria, Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România și Forțelor Armate ale U.R.S.S. În cadrul jocului de război au fost elaborate problemele desfășurării mobilizării trupelor și regruparea acestora pe distanțe mari, acoperirea frontierei de stat, respingerea primei lovituri a inamicului și ducerea acțiunilor de luptă atât cu arme obișnuite cît și cu întrebuintarea mijloacelor nucleare. Jocul de război a arătat nivelul ridicat al pregătirii operative a generalilor, amiralilor, ofițerilor și organelor de conducere în întregime, priceperea lor de a organiza just și de a asigura acțiuni ofensive hotărîte ale trupelor de uscat, aviației de front, forțelor maritime militare și trupelor A.A.T. ale țărilor aliate.

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Aplicația de armată cu trupe „Primăvara” cu participarea marilor unități și unităților Armatei Populare Naționale a Republicii Democrate Germane și a Grupului de trupe sovietice din Germania. Aplicația a exercitat o influență pozitivă asupra calității pregătirii comandanților, statelor majore, trupelor și la cultivarea în rândurile întregului personal a unor înalte calități de luptă și moral-psihologice. Ea a contribuit la întărirea continuă a frăției de arme, a cooperării și înțelegerii reciproce dintre armatele aliate.

Aplicația trupelor de rachete cu destinație tactico-operativă din armatele Republicii Populare Bulgaria, Republicii Populare Ungare, Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România și Forțelor Armate ale U.R.S.S. sub conducerea comandantului trupelor de rachete și artilerie din trupele de uscat ale Armatei Sovietice. Pe timpul desfășurării aplicației, trupele au dobândit practică în pregătirea și executarea loviturilor grupate și masate cu rachete pe timpul desfășurării din marș, ziua și noaptea, cu lansarea practică a rachetelor de luptă.

Convocarea șefilor Marilor (principalelor) state majore ale armatelor statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia în problemele pregătirii de mobilizare a trupelor. Convocarea a permis elaborarea unor puncte de vedere puse de acord îndreptate spre ridicarea continuă a pregătirii de mobilizare și de luptă a trupelor.

Aplicația operativă de comandament și stat major cu participarea statelor majore operative ale Armatei Populare Naționale a Republicii Democrate Germane și a Grupului de trupe sovietice din Germania, condusă de Ministrul Apărării Naționale a Republicii Democrate Germane. La aplicație au fost perfecționate deprinderile comandanților și statelor majore în conducerea trupelor în situații complexe și care se schimbă rapid.

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Organele de conducere au dobândit o mare experiență în activitatea desfășurată în condiții de campanie pentru conducerea trupelor pe timpul ducerii operației ofensive.

Aplicația trupelor de apărare antiaeriană din țările Tratatului de la Varșovia condusă de comandantul trupelor A.A.T. ale țărilor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia la care au participat pînă la 100 de avioane țintă, peste 2000 de avioane ale aviației de vânătoare și aproximativ 500 de divizioane ale trupelor de rachete antiaeriene. La aplicație, organele de conducere, forțele și mijloacele au dobândit practică în respingerea loviturilor inamicului aerian în condițiile bruiajului radio intens, precum și în asigurarea cooperării dintre trupele A.A.T. ale țărilor vecine.

Aplicația de comandament și stat major de armată, cu trupe marcate, condusă de adjunctul ministrului Apărării Naționale a Republicii Socialiste Cehoslovace. Statele majore și trupele Armatei Populare Cehoslovace și ale Grupului Central de Trupe, participante la aplicație, au dobândit deprinderi în organizarea și ducerea bătăliei și luptei de întîlnire, în folosirea și desantarea practică a desantului parașutat și din elicoptere în condițiile întrebuintării mijloacelor de nimicire obișnuite, precum și a armei nucleare.

Aplicația tactică specială a trupelor de transmisiuni ale Armatei Polone, Armatei Populare Cehoslovace, Armatei Populare Naționale a Republicii Democrate Germane și a Grupului de trupe sovietice din Germania condusă de șeful Marelui stat major al Armatei Polone. La aplicație, trupele de transmisiuni și-au perfecționat pregătirea în asigurarea legăturilor de cooperare dintre statele majore ale marilor unități operative și marile unități ale armatelor aliate cu instalarea practică a nodurilor de transmisiuni și construirea liniilor de transmisiuni.

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In special au fost construite linii radioreleu pe distanțe de peste 4500 km care traversau trei țări aliate.

Aplicații de stat major pentru elaborarea problemelor privind legăturile de cooperare dintre flotele aliate din Mările Neagră și Baltică, conduse de șefii statelor majore ale Flotei Maritime Militare a Republicii Democrate Germane și Flotei Maritime Militare a Republicii Populare Bulgaria. La aplicații s-a acordat o atenție deosebită elaborării acțiunilor coordonate ale flotelor aliate pe timpul îndeplinirii în comun a misiunilor de luptă.

In următoarele zile se va desfășura pe teritoriul Republicii Populare Ungare o importantă aplicație de comandament și stat major de front, în teren, cu participarea comandanților, statelor majore operative și a statelor majore din unitățile Armatei Populare Ungare și Armatei Sovietice.

La aplicație se vor prelucra probleme privind aducerea trupelor la capacitatea de luptă ridicată, respingerea loviturii prin surprindere a inamicului și trecerea la ofensivă hotărâtă cu întrebuințarea mijloacelor de nimicire obișnuite și a armei nucleare.

Potrivit planurilor comandamentelor naționale s-au executat o serie de aplicații tactice de divizie și aplicații tactice speciale care au contribuit la creșterea continuă a deprinderilor în campanie, pe mare și în aer, a marilor unități, unități și nave pe timpul acțiunilor duse cu folosirea armei nucleare și a mijloacelor obișnuite de nimicire.

Toate aplicațiile executate, jocurile de război și convocările s-au desfășurat la un nivel înalt și au fost foarte utile pentru participanți. Ele au contribuit la ridicarea capacității de luptă a trupelor, la întărirea frăției de arme a Forțelor Armate Unite și ridicarea pregătirii moral-psiho-logice a personalului armatelor.

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Activitățile de aducere a trupelor, forțelor și mijloacelor la diferite grade de pregătire se realizează într-un mod mai organizat.

Comandanții și statele majore au manifestat mai mult spirit creator în rezolvarea misiunilor încredințate, au studiat mai profund problemele planificării și organizării operației și luptei moderne.

Unele activități desfășurate au permis să se elaboreze propuneri comune pentru perfecționarea continuă a pregătirii operative și de luptă. Aceste propuneri au fost transmise marilor state majore prin directivele respective.

Paralel cu rezultatele pozitive, în pregătirea operativă și de luptă a trupelor și statelor majore există și deficiențe care au fost reliefate la bilanțurile aplicațiilor și jocurilor de război.

Statele majore ale unor armate și divizii nu sînt încă suficient de pregătite pentru conducerea fermă și neîntreruptă a trupelor în condițiile unui puternic bruiaj radio și în situațiile care se schimbă în mod brusc.

Unele mari unități, unități și nave sînt instruite în mod uniform fără a se ține cont de caracterul teatrului de acțiuni militare, de pregătirea de luptă a inamicului și de particularitățile moral-psihologice.

În planificarea acțiunilor de luptă fără întrebuintărea armei nucleare, statele majore scapă din vedere folosirea mijloacelor și forțelor obișnuite, nu folosesc în totalitate posibilitățile artileriei și aviației pentru nimicirea mijloacelor de atac nuclear al inamicului. Pe timpul trecerii la întrebuintărea armei nucleare nu întotdeauna se iau măsurile necesare pentru introducerea oportună în luptă a forțelor nucleare cu destinație tactic-operativă.

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Pe timpul ducerii acțiunilor de luptă comune, cooperarea între categoriile de forțe armate între arme, precum și între marile unități și unitățile armatelor aliate nu se organizează în totalitate. Cooperarea întreruptă se restabilește încă încet. Se acordă încă puțină atenție asigurării continuității conducerii.

În elaborarea planurilor de deplasare a trupelor pe distanțe mari alegerea itinerarelor, raioanelor de concentrare și a aliniamentelor de desfășurare în unele cazuri se asigură fără a se ține seama de rețeaua de drumuri, cursurile de apă și caracterul terenului.

În unele armate asigurarea trupelor în marș, îndeosebi cercetarea, siguranța și apărarea antiaeriană nu se asigură în mod corespunzător. Pe timpul marșului legăturile nu se organizează întotdeauna în mod chibzuit, fapt ce afectează conducerea trupelor. Toate acestea duc la situația că unele mari unități și unități au viteze de marș scăzute (ziua 10-11 km pe oră).

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În perioada instrucției de vară se creează condiții mult mai favorabile pentru perfecționarea continuă a pregătirii operative și de luptă a statelor majore și a trupelor. În acest scop, statele majore și trupele destinate în componerea Forțelor Armate Unite trebuie să continue, cu perseverență și fermitate, activitatea de ridicare a capacității de luptă și de mobilizare și să-și perfecționeze deprinderile în campanie.

Sarcinile principale în pregătirea operativă și de luptă a Forțelor Armate Unite ale statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia, pentru perioada de vară, rămân aceleași care au fost prevăzute în directiva nr.0069 din 26 noiembrie 1968.

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Perioada de vară reprezintă o perioadă intensă, în cursul căreia urmează să se execute un număr mare de activități comune. Cele mai importante fiind următoarele :

- jocul de război operativ pe direcția vest, condus de ministrul Apărării U.R.S.S.;
- jocul de război operativ de spate pe hartă, condus de șeful Statului major al Forțelor Armate Unite;
- aplicația tactic-operativă a Forțelor Armate Unite cu debarcarea desantului maritim și aerian, executată pe teritoriul Republicii Populare Polone, condusă de ministrul Apărării Naționale a Republicii Populare Polone;
- aplicația tactic-operativă a Forțelor Armate Unite cu forțarea Dunării, executată pe teritoriul Republicii Socialiste România și Republicii Populare Bulgaria, condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România;
- aplicația de aviație pe direcția vest, condusă de Comandantul suprem al Forțelor Aeriene Militare ale Armatei Sovietice.

Toate acestea vor cere comandanților și statelor majore o planificare bine gândită și cu un scop bine definit, o pregătire minuțioasă, asigurarea unei înalte calități a tuturor activităților care sînt îndreptate spre ridicarea capacității de luptă, a pregătirii operative și de luptă, realizîndu-se pe timpul executării acestora, scopurile de învățămînt și punerea de acord cu cerințele moderne ale luptei și operației.

Pe timpul desfășurării jocurilor de război, a aplicațiilor de comandament și stat major, cu trupe și tactice speciale trebuie să se acorde mai multă atenție elaborării problemelor organizării și menținerii unei conduceri ferme și neîntrerupte a trupelor și a cooperării dintre acestea, ridicării deprinderilor în campanie a trupelor îndeosebi pregătirii de marș a marilor unități și unități, precum și organizării și ducerii acțiunilor de luptă cu întrebuintarea atât a mijloacelor obișnuite de nimicire, cît și cîntrebuintarea armei nucleare. . / .

Trebuie folosită la maximum perioada de vară pentru ridicarea calității deprinderilor în campanie a tuturor genurilor de armă pentru care se va continua executarea aplicațiilor cu trageri de luptă și bombardament atât ziua cât și noaptea. Să se instruiască subunitățile și unitățile în teren, în aer și pe mare, apropiind acțiunile lor de situația de luptă.

Pe timpul instruirii trupelor să se folosească mai mult dibăcia, acțiunile tactice surprinzătoare, acțiunile înșelătoare, bazate pe analiza posibilităților inamicului și trupelor proprii, ținându-se cont de particularitățile teatrelor de acțiuni militare.

Să se continue educarea întregului personal al marilor unități și unităților în spiritul ducerii unor acțiuni ofensive combative, să se cultive dârzenia precum și capacitatea ca în cele mai critice momente ale luptei să îndeplinească cu o perseverență de fier ordinul de luptă.

Să se atragă atenția ofițerilor, generalilor și amiralilor că dragostea lor de muncă și executarea întocmai a ordinelor constituie una din condițiile principale ale formării unor înalte calități morale și de luptă a militarilor și a mobilizării lor pentru îndeplinirea cu succes a misiunilor ce stau în fața trupelor.

Conceptiile și planurile pentru executarea jocurilor de război comune, a aplicațiilor de comandament și stat major, a celor tactice și tactice speciale mi se vor prezenta cu două luni înainte de începerea aplicațiilor.

Conceptiile aplicațiilor (jocurilor) ce urmează a se executa rog să fie prezentate :

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- jocul de război operativ de spate pe hartă pînă la 1 iunie;
- aplicația tactic-operativă pe teritoriul Republicii Populare Polone, pînă la 15 iunie (planul precizat și alte materiale, conform telegramii nr.484 din 06.05 a.c.);
- aplicația tactic-operativă pe teritoriul Republicii Socialiste România și Republicii Populare Bulgaria pînă la 1 august;
- aplicația de aviație pe direcția vest - pînă la 1 iunie;

COMANDANTUL SUPREM

al

FORTELOR ARMATE UNITE

Mareșal al Uniunii Sovietice I.IAKUBOVSKI

SEFUL STATULUI MAJOR

AL FORTELOR ARMATE UNITE

General de armată Stemenko

Source: Romanian National Archives, Fund "Tratatul de la Varșovia (MApN)" – File no. 29/1969, pp.91-100.

**Report of the First Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces and Chief of the General Staff regarding the discussions between the delegation of the Ministry of the Romanian Armed Forces and the UAF leadership regarding the tactical-operative common manoeuvre with troops expected to be executed in October 1969 on the territory of Romania**

REPUBLICA SOCIALISTĂ ROMÂNIA

MINISTERUL FORTELOR ARMATE  
MARELE STAT MAJOR

Nr. O.K. 0010  
septembrie 1969  
oraşul Bucureşti

P. 1969  
*discutat  
Preşedintele CC PCR*

INTRARE  
Nr. C. U. 00263  
Ziua 29 luna sept 1969

STRICT-SECRET 214  
Exemplarul nr. 1

Tovarăşului  
ION GHEORGHE MAURER  
PRESEDINTELE CONSILIULUI DE MINISTRI  
AL  
REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMANIA

=====  
Potrivit aprobării Prezidiului Permanent al Comitetului Central al Partidului Comunist Român în ziua de 09.09. 1969, delegația Ministerului Forțelor Armate condusă de subsemnatul a discutat, la Moscova, cu șeful de stat major al Comandamentului Unificat generalul de armată Stemenko S.M. problemele aprobate și în principal problema aplicației tactic-operative comune cu trupe prevăzută a se executa pe teritoriul Republicii Socialiste România în luna octombrie a.c., condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România.

1. În discuții am susținut că în acest an, din multiple motive, nu mai este posibil să se desfășoare vreo aplicație de cooperare pe teritoriul țării noastre și am propus ca în anul 1970 să se desfășoare o aplicație de cooperare pe hartă condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România la care să participe comandamente (grupe operative) din forțele armate ale Republicii Socialiste România, Uniunii Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste și Republicii Populare Bulgare.

Generalul de armată Stemenko, la rîndul său, a arătat că ar înțelege să fie decalată aplicația cu trupe din acest an, dar este de neconceput ca ea să fie scoasă complet din

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plan și înlocuită cu alta pe hartă, cu atât mai mult cu cât nu este nici un precedent de această natură. În continuare, a susținut că aplicații cu trupe s-au desfășurat pe teritoriul tuturor țărilor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia la care au participat și trupe din Forțele Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România, ca de exemplu în Republica Populară Bulgaria în anul 1967; de asemenea, trageri cu rachete care se execută anual în poligoanele din U.R.S.S.

Neexecutarea acestei aplicații, spunea el, va da naștere, pe de o parte la unele comentarii și speculații că în cadrul Tratatului de la Varșovia ar exista fisuri serioase, iar, pe de altă parte, celelalte țări participante la Tratat le reproșează că pe teritoriul țărilor lor se execută asemenea aplicații iar pe teritoriul Republicii Socialiste România nu se desfășoară ca și când Republica Socialistă România ar avea un regim preferențial.

Din întreaga argumentare a generalului de armată Stemenko, reieșea clar că pentru Comandamentul Unificat este o problemă de prestigiu atât față de ceilalți participanți la Tratatul de la Varșovia cât și pentru cei din afara acestuia.

Neajungînd la un punct de vedere comun, am lăsat această discuție în suspensie trecînd la discutarea celorlalte probleme.

În final, revenindu-se la problema aplicației, am convenit ca în toamna anului 1969 să nu executăm pe teritoriul României nici un fel de aplicație de cooperare urmînd ca aplicația planificată pentru anul 1969 să fie replanificată pentru anul 1970 și să se desfășoare fără trupe sub forma unei aplicații de comandament și stat major cu transmisiuni în teren pe teritoriul țării noastre condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România la care să participe Republica Socialistă România, Uniunea

Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste și Republica Populară Bulgară. Atît eu, cît și generalul de armată Stemenko, nu ne-am referit în nici un fel, la participarea și a Republicii Populare Ungare, cu toate că el a sesizat că aceasta n-a fost o omisiune întîmplătoare din partea mea.

Totodată am menționat că această activitate presupune, potrivit legilor țării noastre, încheierea unor convenții între guvernele țărilor sus-menționate, care, în ceea ce ne privește necesită să fie aprobate de Marea Adunare Națională a Republicii Socialiste România.

Față de această mențiune, generalul de armată Stemenko nu a ridicat nici un fel de obiecție, afirmînd, că dacă așa sînt legile țării noastre, ele să fie respectate.

În ceea ce privește perioada desfășurării aplicației, generalul de armată Stemenko a susținut că aceasta să aibă loc în primăvara anului 1970 (lunie martie - aprilie) și nu către sfîrșitul anului 1970 întrucît ea n-ar mai putea să apară ca o amîinare a celei din 1969. Am convenit, ca aceasta să fie pusă de acord înainte de definitivarea proiectului planului de activități comune pe anul 1970.

2. Privitor la celelalte probleme discutate nu au reieșit aspecte deosebite care ar necesita să fie subliniate în prezentul raport.

3. După terminarea discutării problemelor cu generalul de armată Stemenko, delegația noastră a fost primită de Comandantul Suprem, mareșalul Iacubovski, care, după schimbul obișnuit de cuvinte protocolare a arătat că a fost informat de generalul de armată Stemenko și că personal este de acord ca aplicația cu trupe planificată pentru anul 1969 să nu se mai execute, să fie replanificată pentru anul 1970 și să se desfășoare fără trupe sub forma unei aplicații

217

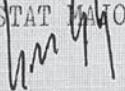
de comandament și stat major cu transmisiuni în teren pe teritoriul țării noastre condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România cu participarea Republicii Socialiste România, Uniunii Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste și Republicii Populare Bulgare, dar, că este de dorit, să se pună de acord asupra perioadei desfășurării acesteia cu țările participante la această aplicație înainte de definitivarea proiectului planului de activități comune pe anul 1970.

Propun să aprobați ca aplicația cu trupe planificată pentru anul 1969 să fie replanificată pentru anul 1970 și să se desfășoare fără trupe sub forma unei aplicații de comandament și stat major cu transmisiuni în teren cu participarea Republicii Socialiste România, Uniunii Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste și Republicii Populare Bulgare condusă de ministrul Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România.

În ceea ce privește perioada de desfășurare a acestei aplicații, rog a aproba ca Ministerul Forțelor Armate să insiste, în continuare, ca ea să se desfășoare în perioada de toamnă iar în cazul când acest lucru nu va fi posibil de obținut, să se execute în primăvară (martie - aprilie).



PREM-ADJUNCT AL MINISTRULUI FORTELOR ARMATE  
SI SEF AL MARELUI STAT MAJOR  
General - colonel

  
Ion Gheorghe

Un raport cu conținut identic s-a înaintat tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu secretar general al Partidului Comunist Român, președintele Consiliului de Stat.

Report of the Minister of Armed Forces of the Romania regarding the discussions between the delegation of the Romanian Armed Forces and the UAF leadership on the conception of the joint exercise foreseen to take place in March 1970 on the territory of Romania

(15) 17

REPUBLICA SOCIALISTĂ ROMÂNIA



MINISTERUL FORTELOR ARMATE  
MINISTRUL

INTRARE

Nr. C. U. 00267

Zila 11 Luna Mart 1970

STRICT SECRET

Exemplar nr. 3

Nr. M. 001020  
din 07.03.1970

Tovarășului  
NICOLAE CEAUSESCU  
SECRETAR GENERAL AL PARTIDULUI COMUNIST ROMÂN  
PRESEDINTELE CONSILIULUI DE STAT

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In zilele de 3 și 4 martie 1970 generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe, prim adjunctul ministrului Forțelor Armate și șef al Marelui stat major, însoțit de generalul colonel Nicolescu Marin, adjunct al ministrului Forțelor Armate, generalul locotenent Orban Octavian și generalul locotenent Lefter Gheorghe, a fost la Moscova și a purtat discuții cu mareșalul Iakubovski I.I., Comandantul Suprem al Forțelor Armate Unite și generalul de armată Stemenko S.M., șeful de stat major al Forțelor Armate Unite, asupra concepției aplicației comune prevăzută a se desfășura în luna martie 1970 pe teritoriul Republicii Socialiste România, sub conducerea ministrului Forțelor Armate și în mod deosebit asupra necesității încheierii unei convenții între guvernele Republicii Socialiste România și Uniunii Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste.

Generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe, împreună cu însoțitorii săi, a fost primit o dată de generalul de armată Stemenko și de două ori de către mareșalul Iakubovski. Discuțiile au durat în total 5 ore, din care 3 ore cu mareșalul Iakubovski.

După ce i-a informat asupra principalelor elemente ale concepției aplicației, generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe a arătat că, potrivit legii țării noastre, pentru ca aplicația să se poată desfășura, este necesară încheierea unor convenții bilaterale între guvernele Republicii Socialiste România și Uniunii Republicilor Sovietice Socialiste pe de o parte și guvernele Republicii Socialiste România și Republicii Populare Bulgaria pe de altă parte, care, în ceea ce ne privește trebuie apoi ratificate de Marea Adunare Națională a Republicii Socialiste România.

1. În cadrul discuțiilor purtate, mareșalul Iakovski I.I. și generalul de armată Stemenko S.M. au arătat, în esență, următoarele:

- în practica de până acum, pentru executarea aplicațiilor comune nu s-au încheiat asemenea convenții; nici un stat, inclusiv Republica Socialistă România nu a cerut acest lucru atunci când trupele sau comandamentele sale au participat la aplicații și trageri în poligoane pe teritoriul altor state;

- din punct de vedere juridic, Comandantul Suprem și Statul major al Forțelor Armate Unite se conduc după documentele aprobate la Consfătuirea de la Budapesta din martie 1969. Statutul Forțelor Armate Unite și Comandamentului Unificat, la articolele 11 și 25, nu menționează necesitatea încheierii unor astfel de convenții pentru a se putea executa aplicații comune. Atunci când a fost elaborat statutul, nimeni nu a cerut includerea unei asemenea prevederi, cu toate că Declarația Marii Adunări Naționale a Republicii Socialiste România a fost adoptată la 22 august 1968, înainte de semnarea acestuia;

./.

- este adevărat că fiecare stat are legile lui, care trebuie respectate, dar întrucît în U.R.S.S. nu există o lege care să prevadă încheierea unei convenții în astfel de situații "nici Stemenko, nici Iakubovski, nici Greciko" nu pot propune guvernului sovietic să-i împuternicească pentru a o încheia.

Concluzionînd, mareșalul Iakubovski I.I. a arătat că "nici nu poate fi vorba de încheierea unei convenții între guverne".

Mareșalul Iakubovski I.I. și generalul de armată Stemenko S.M. au afirmat că noi, sub diferite pretexte, nu vrem ca pe teritoriul țării noastre să se desfășoare aplicații la care să participe și trupe din alte armate; dacă în anul 1969 au înțeles motivele pentru care nu s-a putut executa aplicația comună prevăzută, acum consideră ca premeditată condiționarea executării ei de încheierea unei convenții, pentru ca astfel aplicația să nu aibă loc.

Au propus ca, pentru a se respecta, după părerea lor, legea existentă în Republica Socialistă România, în locul înscrierii în convenții, datele referitoare la participarea la aplicație a comandamentelor din armatele U.R.S.S. și R.P.Bulgaria pe teritoriul țării noastre să se treacă fie pe harta cu concepția aplicației, fie ca o anexă separată la concepție, așa cum este practica lor în relațiile cu celelalte armate ale statelor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia.

Propunerea a fost argumentată în sensul că aplicația nici măcar nu se efectuează cu trupe, întrucît din partea armatei sovietice participă numai o grupă operativă a unui comandament de divizie, formată din 30-40 ofițeri, iar comandamentul mării unități din armata bulgară intră pe teritoriul R.S.România doar 3-4 km.

De aceea ar fi suficient ca documentele astfel întocmite să fie semnate de șeful Marelui stat major al Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România și de șeful Statului major al Comandamentului Unificat, iar aprobarea lor să se facă de către Guvernul Republicii Socialiste România, potrivit prevederilor constituționale ale țării noastre.

2. În discuția avută, generalul de armată Stemenko S.M. a reproșat că în ultimele luni se observă din partea noastră o poziție negativă și a dat în acest sens drept exemple:

- neparticiparea țării noastre la aplicația din luna iulie, planificată a avea loc în R.F.Ungară;
- faptul că nu am făcut observații la proiectul de statut al reprezentanților Comandantului Suprem;
- faptul că nu am fost de acord cu elaborarea unor instrucțiuni comune privind păstrarea secretului;
- necomunicarea datelor referitoare la încheierea protocolului de dezvoltare a forțelor armate pe perioada 1971-1975.

Mareșalul Iakubovski I.I. a adăugat că nu vrem să participăm la aplicația cu trupe ce urmează să aibă loc în luna septembrie în R.D.Germană.

3. În cuvântul său, generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe a prezentat poziția noastră în conformitate cu punctul de vedere aprobat și, în esență, a arătat:

- problema încheierii unor convenții bilaterale, în vederea executării aplicațiilor comune, nu este o problemă nouă. Ea a fost ridicată încă din anul 1968 de către reprezentanții Forțelor Armate ale R.S.România la diferite consfătuiri și întâlniri.

Este adevărat că noi am participat cu trupe și comandamente la aplicații și alte activități în afara teritoriului țării noastre fără a încheia convenții, dar am procedat astfel deoarece nu ni s-a cerut acest lucru. Dacă în viitor ni se va pune problema încheierii de convenții pentru participarea la aplicații și trageri în poligoane, sîntem de acord să le încheiem;

- articolul 10 din Statutul Forțelor Armate Unite și Comandamentului Unificat prevede: "Comandantul Suprem ... cu acordul miniștrilor apărării iar la nevoie și al guvernelor, organizează și execută activități în cadrul Forțelor Armate Unite, îndreptate spre ridicarea pregătirii de luptă și de mobilizare a acestora". Printre activitățile îndreptate spre ridicarea pregătirii de luptă noi considerăm că se numără și aplicațiile comune. Practica de pînă acum de a se trece pe harta concepției unele detalii referitoare la trupele străine participante, nu poate înlocui convenția prevăzută de legislația română.

În concluzie a arătat că fără încheierea convenției între guverne nu poate avea loc nici un fel de aplicație comună pe teritoriul țării noastre.

În legătură cu reproșurile făcute de generalul de armată Stemenko S.M., generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe a arătat că noi ne îndeplinim obligațiile pe care ni le asumăm, inclusiv cele din planul cu activitățile comune, iar în unele cazuri și solicitările făcute în afara planului.

4. La rugămintea expresă a mareșalului Iakubovski I.I., în cea de a doua zi a discuțiilor i s-a prezentat concepția aplicației. Acesta a apreciat că este o concepție interesantă și și-a exprimat regretul că nu va putea fi executată.

5. La încheierea discuțiilor, mareșalul Iakubovski I.I. a solicitat generalului colonel Ion Gheorghe să transmită ministrului Forțelor Armate ale Republicii Socialiste România, iar dacă are posibilitatea și tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu, rugămintea sa de a fi de acord ca aplicația să se desfășoare fără încheierea convențiilor. În acest sens, el a arătat că așteaptă un răspuns din partea noastră.

Generalul colonel Ion Gheorghe l-a încredințat că va transmite cele solicitate, arătând totodată că nu întrevede posibilitatea executării aplicației fără încheierea convențiilor, întrucât legile țării sînt respectate deopotrivă de către toți cetățenii ei.

Discuțiile au decurs într-o atmosferă calmă, normală. De remarcat este atitudinea ponderată și atentă a mareșalului Iakubovski I.I.

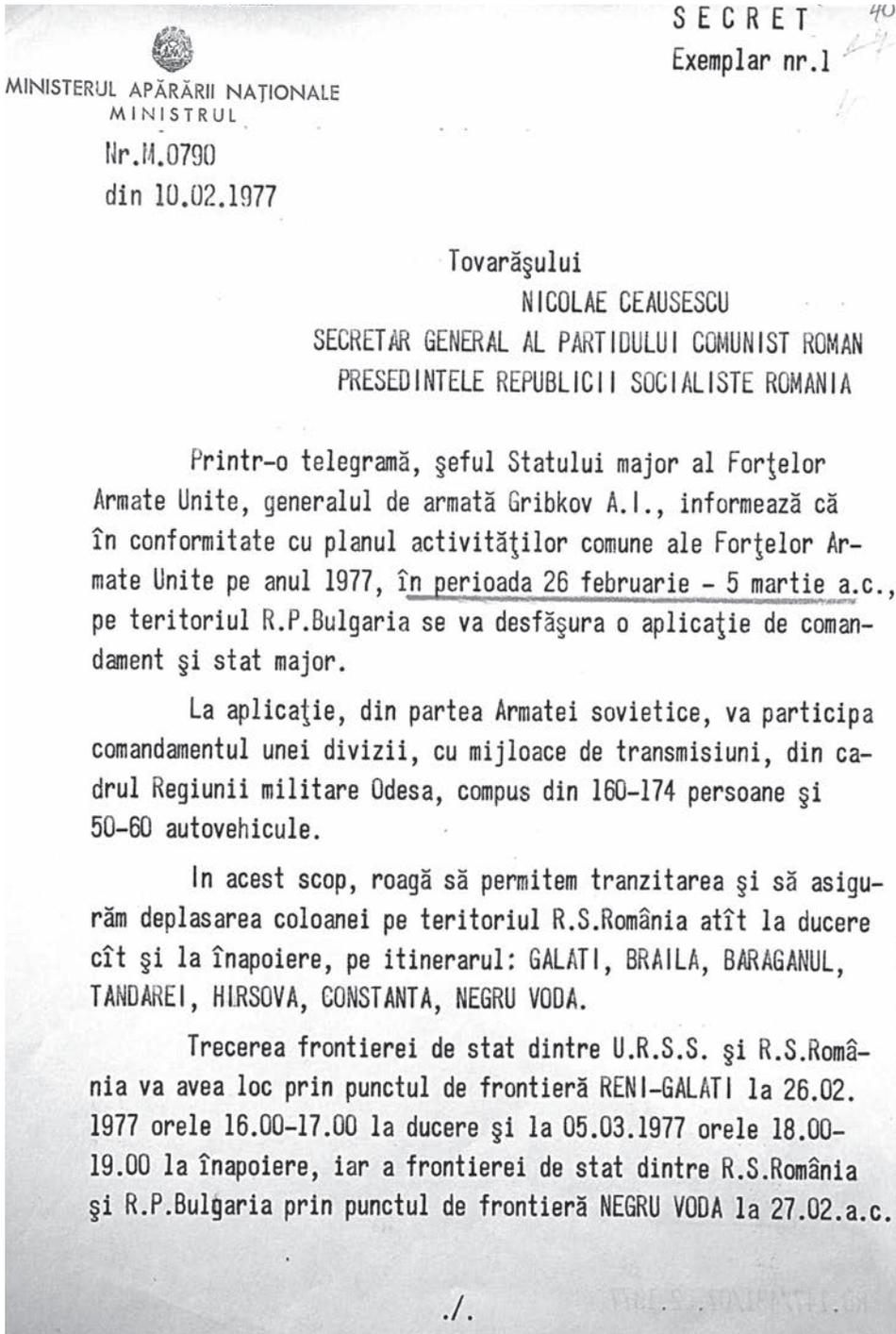
6. Întrucît mareșalul Iakubovski I.I. a rugat ca părerea lui să fie adusă la cunoștința mea și a dumneavoastră și așteaptă un răspuns, propun să i se comunice că punctul nostru de vedere nu s-a schimbat și că, deci, desfășurarea aplicației este condiționată de încheierea celor două convenții.

Rog a aproba.

MINISTRUL FORTELOR ARMATE  
ale  
REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMANIA  
General-colonel

Ion Ioniță

Examples regarding requests and approvals for transit through  
the territory of Romania after 1968



Nr. 039  
din 11.02.1977

ARHIVA  
Comitetului Politic Executiv  
al C.C. al P.C.R.  
Nr. 391 / 14.11.1977

503 / M. 2. 1977

Cancelaria C.C. al P.C.R.  
Nr. 0546 / 12.2.1977

Tovarășului

NICOLAE CEAUȘESCU

SECRETAR GENERAL AL PARTIDULUI COMUNIST ROMAN  
PRESEDINTELE REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMANIA

*Da*  
*[Signature]*

Supun spre aprobare propunerile ministrului  
apărării naționale privind tranzitarea și asigurarea  
deplasării prin țara noastră a unei coloane militare  
sovietice care, în perioada 26 februarie - 5 martie  
a.c., va participa la o aplicație de comandament și  
stat major pe teritoriul Republicii Populare Bulgaria.

Aplicația se va desfășura în cadrul planului  
de activități comune ale Forțelor Armate Unite, cu  
participarea comandamentului unei divizii, compus din  
160 - 174 persoane și 50 - 60 autovehicule.

*[Signature]*

C.E. 3 ex.





REPUBLICA SOCIALISTĂ ROMÂNIA



MINISTERUL APĂRĂRII NAȚIONALE  
MINISTRUL

Nr.M. 03839

din 23.05.1989

Tovarășului

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU

SECRETAR GENERAL AL PARTIDULUI COMUNIST ROMÂN  
PRESEDINTELE REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMÂNIA

SECRET  
Exemplarul nr. 1 <sup>5</sup>

Marele Stat Major al Forțelor Armate ale U.R.S.S. a adresat rugămintea de a se aproba tranzitarea teritoriului țării noastre de către 3 grupe operative din armata sovietică - una de armată și două de divizii constituite într-o singură coloană, avînd în componere 83 autovehicule cu 240 persoane, care vor participa la o aplicație de comandament și stat major, ce se va desfășura în R.P.Bulgaria, în perioada 4-9 iunie 1989.

Tranzitarea urmează a se executa în nopțile de 2/3 iunie la ducere și 10/11 iunie a.c. la înapoiere, pe itinerarul Galați, Brăila, Tândărei, Hîrșova, Medgidia, Negru Vodă.

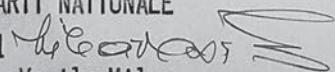
Vă raportăm că, potrivit aprobării Dumneavoastră, astfel de tranzitări ale teritoriului țării noastre au avut loc și în anii anteriori.

Propunem și respectuos Vă rugăm a aproba tranzitarea teritoriului R.S.România de către grupele operative ale armatei sovietice, la datele și pe itinerarul prevăzut în harta anexă.

Ministerul Apărării Naționale, împreună cu Ministerul de Interne, va lua măsurile ce se impun pe timpul deplasării coloanei militare sovietice pe teritoriul țării noastre.

MINISTRUL APĂRĂRII NAȚIONALE

General-colonel

  
Vasile Milea



1340/25.5.1989

H CANCELARIA C. C. AL P. C. R.  
NP1383 24.V.1989

ARHIVA  
Comitetului Politic Executiv  
al C.C. al P.C.R.  
813 2.V.1989

*[Handwritten signature]*

Tovarășului

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU

SECRETAR GENERAL AL PARTIDULUI COMUNIST ROMÂN  
PRESEDINTELE REPUBLICII SOCIALISTE ROMANIA

Supun spre aprobare propunerea ministrului apărării naționale privind tranzitarea teritoriului țării noastre de către 3 grupe operative din armata sovietică constituite într-o singură coloană, avînd în componere 83 autovehicule cu 240 persoane, care vor participa la o aplicație în R.P. Bulgaria.

Tranzitarea urmează a se executa în nopțile de 2/3 iunie la ducere și 10/11 iunie a.c. la înapoiere.

*[Handwritten signature]*

I.Coman, V.Milea

SECRET

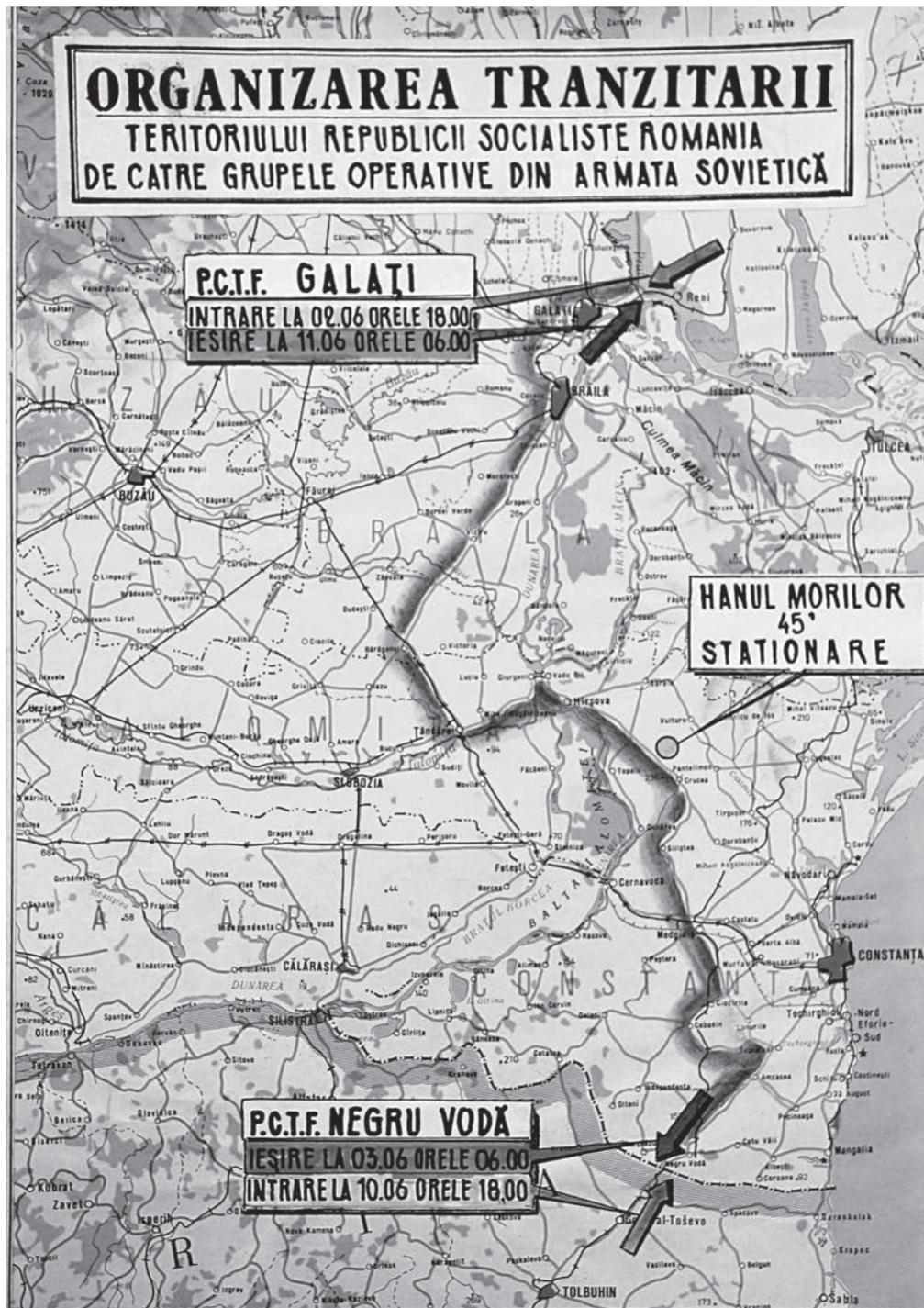
26 mai 1989

H.01383

Vă comunicăm că a fost aprobată propunerea Ministerului Apărării Naționale, cuprinsă în raportul M.03839/1989, privind tranzitarea teritoriului R.S.România, în prima jumătate a lunii iunie, de către o coloană de autovehicule și militari ai armatei sovietice.

CANCELARIA CC AL PCR,

SG/01/3 ex.



Source: Romanian National Archives, Fund "Comitetul Politic Executiv al CC al PCR – Secția Cancelarie" – File 1/1974, Fund "Comitetul Politic Executiv al CC al PCR – Secția Administrativ-Politică" – Files no. 2/1976 and 8/1989, and Fund "Tratatul de la Varșovia (MAPN)" – File no. 29/1969.



# EAST GERMANY AS PLAYER IN THE “GLOBAL COLD WAR”? EAST GERMANY’S MILITARY COMMITMENT TO AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ITS COORDINATION WITH THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP

KLAUS STORKMANN, PhD

For a long time, many rumours and assumptions about the East German military in Africa and the Middle East have been abounding. Looking at the contemporary publications of the West German and Anglo-American press it appears as if the East Germans and their military had been very active on the global arena. In March 1980, the title of the Hamburg news magazine *Der Spiegel* showed a close-up of four soldiers of the National People’s Army and wrote in the style of a Wehrmacht cuff title “Honecker’s Africa Corps”. With this sensational headline, the magazine reported in its cover story about the military activities of the East German armed forces in the Third World, in particular in Africa.<sup>1</sup> In December 1978, with reference to Bavarian Minister-President and leader of the CSU, Franz Josef Strauß, the Berlin-based *Tagesspiegel* printed a report that 5,000 “soldiers from the East German army”, primarily “elite forces such as paratroopers”, were in Angola alone. 2000 of them were said to be “currently employed in an offensive operation”.<sup>2</sup> In February 1979, the *Tagesspiegel* headlined a new “Africa Corps” of the GDR and published a report by the newspaper’s own correspondent about the redeployment of “several East German units, including a regiment of the special paratrooper unit “Willy Sänger”, from Ethiopia to Angola, where a total of nearly 5,000 East German mercenaries were stationed”.<sup>3</sup> In February 1980, the daily newspaper *Die Welt* had stated that the total number of East German military experts throughout Africa was indeed “around 30,000”. Furthermore, East Germany “spent more than

200 million Mark on war materiel for revolutionary forces in sub-Saharan Africa”.<sup>4</sup> In April 1980, the American *Time* magazine dedicated a special article to the East German military activities in the Third World; it was significantly titled “Here Come Europe’s Cubans”.<sup>5</sup>

In 2012, an extensive study examined for the first time what kind of military assistance the GDR had in fact provided, whether NVA troops had indeed been deployed to Africa, what had been the extent of the weapons deliveries and how many foreign military personnel had been trained in the National People’s Army (NVA).<sup>6</sup> This paper is based on that study. The relevance of the topic at hand is also due to the ongoing debate among historians about the global Cold War. The focal points and locations of that conflict are currently the subject of heated discussions. Contemporary history research increasingly focuses on the significance of the so-called Third World and discusses the activities of the superpowers and their allied countries in these regions. More and more experts advocate the view that although Europe was and remained the focus for both blocs, the military side of the conflict between the two systems had been increasingly moved to in the Third World.

Both powers tried to reach their global strategic goals not only in Europe but in all parts of the world as well. At the time, virtually no country in the world remained unaffected by the American and Soviet quest for ‘global dominance’. Regional and local conflicts thus became the site of the battle of the super powers.

Odd Arne Westad, a leading expert in the research of the “globalisation of the Cold War”, published a well-received study that changed the academic discourse on the East-West conflict in 2007. Westad published his study under the concise title *The Global Cold War* and used the term “creation of the Third World”.<sup>7</sup> Robert J. McMahon also emphasised in hindsight that the term “Third World” would not exist today if not for the Cold War. The term was coined to define the place of the system confrontation between the First and Second World (i.e. West and East) for global power.<sup>8</sup> Vladimir Shubin also uses some of Westad’s basic research in his 2008 book, which he had aptly entitled *The Hot ‘Cold War’*. Shubin who himself had been in positions where he had been responsible for the Soviet contacts into various African countries focuses in his book on Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia, and provides initial first-hand insights into the actions of the USSR, a topic where little research has been done to this day.<sup>9</sup>

Both the East and the West perceived the Cold War in the same way; they observed and assessed virtually every regional dispute through the lens of the East-West conflict. Accordingly, the political support and military assistance granted to the parties to the conflict were formed. Losses on the opposing side had to be turned into victories for their own camp. The own commitment was subjected to a cost-benefit-risk analysis. Even an indirect military confrontation with the United States had to be avoided. The risk was too high. Therefore, the states of the Eastern Bloc withdrew from Latin America. Instead, they focused their activities on the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Here the risk seemed calculable.<sup>10</sup> Besides also being super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union were prisoners of their “credibility syndrome”<sup>11</sup>: “*Appearing weak and undecided could have raised doubts among their allies and encouraged the enemy*”, Robert McMahon explained.<sup>12</sup>

In 2009, Nikolaus Katzer analysed Moscow’s actions on the international arena between ideology and pragmatism. Successes in the field of foreign policy were regarded as “yardstick for the greatness, power and reputation” of the Soviet Union.<sup>13</sup> With regard to the Soviet Union, recent research indicates that an “imperial overstretch” might have contributed

to its downfall. With good reason, Vladislav Zubok sees a “Soviet overreach” for the late 1970s. It is no accident that the title of his analysis of the Soviet history is “A Failed Empire.”<sup>14</sup> According to Zubok, the Soviet interventions in Africa were not simply an “ideologically driven crusade” but rather an occasion and a place for the Soviet military to demonstrate its new possibilities of power projection. Here, the Soviet Union was able to act as an “equal global power” on par with the United States.<sup>15</sup> Analyzing examples of East German military relations, this study adds numerous new insights to the debate on the “global Cold War”. Was East Germany also a player in the “Global Cold War”? If so, was it a major or rather a minor player on the global field? The answer to these questions can be based on the sources made available by the East German Ministry of Defence in Strausberg, the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in East Berlin, but above all, by the leadership of the SED state-party, which are now freely accessible following the demise of the GDR. This research paper uses mainly the archive collections of the Federal Archives, Military Division (BA-MA) in Freiburg (Germany), the Foundation for the Archives of the Parties and Mass Organizations of the GDR in the Federal Archives (SAPMO-BArch), in Berlin, the Federal Archives Department of GDR (BArch), the Federal Commissioner for the Files of the Former East German State Security Service (BStU) in Berlin and of the Political Archives of the Federal Foreign Office (PA-AA) in Berlin.

### **Initial restraint in weapons deliveries and an about-face in 1967**

Since the late 1950s, East Berlin had received various and sometimes repeated requests for weapons deliveries and training assistance from Africa and the Middle East. Guinea’s request for training of its officers at schools of the Ministry of the Interior, the State Security and the former Border Police was refused by the Secretariat of the SED Central Committee in September 1959. Heinz Hoffmann, then Lieutenant General, First Deputy of the Minister and Chief of Main Staff was tasked to give a negative reply.<sup>16</sup> In the early and mid-1960s, East Berlin received similar requests for military training and/or

weapons and equipment from various African liberation movements and governments, for instance from Congo Brazzaville and the Congolese insurgents in the East of Zaire.<sup>17</sup> A “strictly confidential” internal memorandum of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee of the GDR (AASK) from November 1964 read: *“During the past months, the following liberation movements have requested weapons or military equipment from us or, since they knew that we had denied such deliveries as a matter of principle, have put out a few feelers to see whether our position has changed.”* This is followed by a list of requests from Zimbabwean ZAPU, Mozambique’s FRELIMO, Angola’s MPLA, PAIGC from Portuguese Guinea, the South African ANC as well as from Ecuador for various Latin American liberation movements. In addition to weapons, ANC, FRELIMO and ZAPU requested military training for their fighters, ZAPU also asked for means of transport. As regards requests for weapons from other groups like Zimbabwean ZANU, South Africa’s PAC and Mozambique’s UDE-NAMO, the AASK “played dumb as if we did not understand what the matter was.”<sup>18</sup>

Upon request of the Cuban ministry of defence, Minister of Defence Heinz Hoffmann sent a list of questions to Erich Honecker regarding possible East German support for the Latin American liberation movements: *“Does the GDR have schools to train fighters for partisan or subversive warfare? Is the GDR able to supply weapons and equipment required by partisan groups? Are there any possibilities for one or several Cuban officers to study these problems in the GDR or to get an overview of the possibilities available on the spot?”*<sup>19</sup> Honecker, who had been Secretary for Security Issues of the SED Central Committee at the time, wrote “no” next to all cited questions. The paper illustrates that in November 1966 the East German leadership had not yet been ready to support “partisan activities” in the Third World. Neither fighters were to be trained nor were weapons and equipment to be delivered. As early as in January 1967, a Politburo decision was to change the negative attitude of the GDR towards weapons deliveries. The ever-increasing favors asked from the GDR in this respect certainly boosted the decision-making process on the part of the SED leadership.

On 10 January 1967, the SED Politburo decided in favor of “delivering non-civilian goods to national liberation movements in Africa.” The ministers for state security, defence, the interior and the deputy foreign minister signed the submission. Compared to other drafts, this was an unusual procedure; it can be regarded as an indication for the significance of the decision that was also acknowledged by the other decision-makers.<sup>20</sup> The decision stated in detail that in addition to the Ministry for State Security and the People’s Police, the National People’s Army was also to provide military equipment and weapons from their stocks. The Foreign Ministry and the Ministry for State Security were tasked with the coordination, transport and handover on site. Zimbabwean ZAPU, Mozambique’s FRELIMO, PAIGC in Portuguese Guinea and Angola’s MPLA were named as recipients. The annexes to the decision listed every tiny detail of the weapons and munitions to be delivered.<sup>21</sup>

A comparison shows that the distribution clearly prioritised FRELIMO. Most of the weapons delivered were from old Second World War stocks of the *Wehrmacht* that had been kept at NVA depots; some of them were still in active use in the 1960s. Modern weapons, like the Kalashnikov submachine gun (item 8), were delivered in small numbers only. What looked like an isolated decision in the wording was de facto a precedent-setting fundamental decision. Over the following years, the Politburo and Secretariat repeatedly addressed the issue of weapons and equipment deliveries to the Third World. Weapons deliveries to organizations and governments were often the result of visits of GDR or SED delegations to the countries concerned or of visits of those groups to East Berlin.

### **“Honecker’s war against Israel”? GDR weapons for Egypt and Syria to fight Israel in the war of 1967**

Erich Honecker paid particular attention to support for the Arab states. Egypt and Syria – like the whole Middle East – were hot spots of the East-West conflict. The causes for the Middle East conflict are older and run much deeper than the super powers’ global struggle for influence. Besides, even after the end of

Item	Designation	FRELIMO	ZAPU	MPLA
1	98 K 7.9 mm carbine	4,800	3,200	1,600
2	Type 34 7.9 mm light machine gun	110	75	40
3	7.9 mm cartridges for items 1 and 2	900,000	470,000	240,000
5	7.62 mm sniper rifle	60	40	20
8	Type K. 7.62 mm submachine gun	80	60	30
9	7.62 mm cartridges for item 8	76,000	57,000	28,500
10	Type 43/44...7.9 mm submachine gun	80	50	30
13	Anti-personnel mines	2,000	1,000	500

*Chart listing the weapons and ammunition to be delivered to the African liberation movements in accordance with the SED Politburo decision of 10 January 1967 (Excerpt)<sup>22</sup>*

the East-West conflict, the Middle East has remained the largest global trouble spot.

The Israeli surprise attack of 5 June 1967 was the beginning of the Third Arab-Israeli War, later known as the Six-Day War. To the surprise and to the dismay of both the Arab world and the Eastern bloc, the war ended with an almost complete defeat of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The very quick defeat of the Egypt and Syrian armed forces, which had been equipped with Soviet weapons, unnerved both Moscow and East Berlin equally. The armed forces of Egypt and Syria, which had been modeled on the Soviet armed forces in organization,

days after the beginning of the war: on 7 June 1967, the Politburo decided to provide immediate assistance, immediate military aid and arms deliveries. The next day, the GDR Ministry of Defence reported items that could be delivered to Egypt and Syria immediately or within a few weeks or months.

The deliveries were intended for both Cairo and Damascus. At this early stage, the NVA had not yet decided on the distribution of the items; the decision would probably not be made at their but at the political level.

Egypt's President Gamal Abdal Nasser wanted more: the United Arab Republic (as

Designation	Number	Possible date of delivery
T-34/85 tanks	35	immediately
PMN anti-personnel mines	150,000	immediately
82 mm B-10 guns	5	within a few weeks
107 mm B-11 guns	5	within a few weeks
82 mm grenade launcher	6	within a few weeks
120 mm grenade launcher	6	within a few weeks
MiG-17F	30	within ten days
MiG-17F	20	After repair within several months

*List of possible deliveries to Egypt and Syria compiled by the GDR Ministry of Defence of 8 June 1967 (Excerpt)<sup>23</sup>*

education and training, had suffered a "first-rate debacle". East Germany now entered this battlefield, not with soldiers but with weapons deliveries. The SED leadership responded two

Egypt had officially called itself at the time – or UAR) had "been knocked down"<sup>24</sup> and would otherwise be forced to surrender to the United States. His country needed first and foremost

aircraft with pilots “whether they would be referred to as volunteers or otherwise”.<sup>25</sup> The USSR had already provided “tanks, cannons and aircraft” but “this was not enough”.<sup>26</sup> The UAR regarded itself as the “first line of defence for the socialist camp” and was ready to give up its non-allied status. Nasser specifically asked the GDR also for combat aircraft. Weiß replied that the GDR did not have its own aircraft industry. Nasser painted a dark picture of the situation. He said he had asked the USSR to “send aircraft with pilots and to take over the air command of the UAR”.<sup>27</sup> Israel had air supremacy. The only way was “for the Soviet Union to take a decisive step to break the air superiority of Israel.”<sup>28</sup> In a first assessment of his talk with Nasser, Weiß concluded that Cairo assumed that another attack from Israel was imminent. Nasser’s urgent request for Soviet military advisors was not only the result of the “failure” of the Egypt military leadership but also of “Nasser’s justified political distrust of the senior officer corps” of his country.<sup>29</sup> Markowski and Weiß promised Egypt military assistance worth 180 million Mark.<sup>30</sup>

According to Nasser, Egypt regarded itself as the “first line of defence for the socialist camp” and was ready to give up its non-allied status. Nasser specifically asked the GDR for more combat aircraft and East German pilots. Ulbricht refused: no pilots. Nasser insisted on the NVA pilots. In November 1967, Nasser asked the Vice President of the ruling Arab Socialist Union (ASU) Ali Sabri to approach Walter Ulbricht with a request for military pilots of the NVA. Ulbricht replied: “*It is not the question of whether 20 or 40 aviators from the GDR helped the UAR, volunteers would surely be found*”.<sup>31</sup> He flatly denied the request several times as a “demonstration of a military solution”. Ulbricht verbatim: “*What good would a military demonstration on our part do?*” Also from the UAR’s point of view, this did not seem advisable to him.<sup>32</sup> By implication, Ulbricht seemed to be against a new battle and to commit to a political solution of the Middle East conflict. Ali Sabri replied that the deployment of pilots did not serve a military solution but only the restoration of the military power of his country. Ulbricht declared that the GDR would be unable to provide heavy armament

and aircraft since it did not manufacture them; Cairo should approach Moscow directly.<sup>33</sup> Nasser’s vice-president repeated several times that the problem was not just about weapons; his country lacked trained pilots. Their training took four years. References to the prolonged training and the acute lack of combat pilots made a mockery of the assurance that the pilots would only be used for training and not be employed in combat. Ulbricht did not mention this obvious contradiction, however, he countered that he “*had doubts whether pilots would be able to fulfill such a role*.” He deemed an “*effective defence against low-flying aircraft with rapid-fire weapons*” much more important. Ali Sabri replied that in addition to firearms, pilots were needed to intercept attacking aircraft; the UAR did not have those pilots. Ulbricht advised instead to enforce the development of the party organisation of the governing Arab Socialist Union (SAU) in the armed forces. It was necessary to “*enforce the leading role of the party within the armed forces*” and train workers to become commanders. A “*strong and influential [party] in the armed forces was far more important than 20 or 40 pilots*”, he instructed the Egyptian. The SED was ready to assist the Egyptians in the organisational build-up of the party. Ali Sabri insisted, however, that in view of the acute threat, the UAR “above all needed an effective air defence.” The existing protocol states that the two politicians did not reach an agreement. They talked at cross-purposes. What mattered in the end was Ulbricht’s firm rejection of a “demonstration of a military solution”.

The more remarkable is Ulbricht’s change of mind two years later. In a secret letter to Brezhnev in October 1969, Ulbricht stated that it was necessary to support the Arab forces in their “war of attrition” against Israel with “volunteers from the socialist countries”.<sup>34</sup> But this “required careful internal preparations”: “*It makes no sense to speak publicly about volunteers until certain command tasks are fulfilled*.”<sup>35</sup>

The controversial proposal had been agreed with Honecker, Mielke and Army General Hoffmann in advance.<sup>36</sup> Ulbricht repeated his idea again in February 1970: when he met the Soviet ambassador in East Berlin, he

referred to his proposal to “consult with President Nasser about the usefulness and time of the employment of volunteers from socialist countries”.<sup>37</sup> So far, a response or even decision about the employment of “volunteering” military personnel and pilots in Egypt has not been found. The unusual proposal from East Berlin must be considered in the overall context of Moscow’s increasing military commitment to Cairo and Damascus. The next war came three years later.

### **GDR weapons for Syria to fight Israel in the war of 1973**

In October 1973, Syria and Egypt attacked Israel. East Germany was again immediately on the spot to deliver weapons. This time, only Syria received full support. Relations with Egypt under Sadat had already cooled considerably. On 10 October, Syria’s head of state Hafez al-Assad had applied to the GDR government in East Berlin for military aid. Honecker gave order to the Ministry of National Defence in Strausberg to consider the issue. Three days later, Minister of Defence Heinz Hoffmann reported to State and Party Leader Erich Honecker that “using all means available to us” the NVA would be able to provide the following weapon systems: twelve MiG air defence interceptors, 62 tanks of the then modern type T-54A including ammunition, some 75,000 artillery grenades of various types and 30,000 antitank mines.<sup>38</sup> While the combat activities of the so-called Yom Kippur War still went on in October 1973, the NVA provided twelve interceptors of the then modern MiG-21 type including three units of munition and missiles as well as full ground equipment. In addition, East Germany provided 62 tanks of the then also modern T-54A type including three units of munition. Added to these were some 75,000 artillery grenades of various types and 30,000 antitank mines. According to the Ministry of National Defence, the deliveries were worth a total of 84.3 million Mark. 82.3 million Mark were due to the estimated market value of the equipment, 1.3 million were transport costs and another 0.7 million were unidentified material costs.<sup>39</sup>

Twelve MiG-21 were to be provided to the air forces as immediate military assistance. The MiG-21 were removed from a fighter training regiment. The action began amidst the greatest secrecy. The national emblems of the GDR and all references to the NVA were removed, the aircraft were dismantled, and between 18 and 21 October, while the fighting still continued, they were loaded into six Soviet transport aircraft of the Antonov AN-12 type and shipped to Aleppo. The air route of the MiGs onboard the Antonovs first led to Tököl military airport near Budapest. From Hungary, the aircraft flew via Yugoslavia out to the Adria, between Italy and Greece onto the Mediterranean Sea until they landed in Aleppo. For reasons of secrecy, and probably also in protection against attacks from the Israeli air force above the Mediterranean Sea, the Soviet military aircraft were disguised in the colors of the civilian airline “Aeroflot”. At an air force base near Aleppo, the East German MiGs were reassembled, rigged and painted in the colors of the Syrian Air Force.

Despite the cease-fire for the Syrian front that had come into effect on 22 October, the situation remained extremely tense and highly explosive. Just one day before the first NVA aircraft arrived, their destination airport near Aleppo had been attacked by the Israeli air force.

East German pilots introduced the MiGs to the Syrian airspace. While flying, the aircraft did not encounter Israeli combat aircraft. Contrary to some assumptions made in the press even to this day, combat operations of NVA pilots had never been intended. As contemporary witnesses recalled, the twelve MiG were handed over to “Syrian pilots who spoke Russian perfectly” in late October 1973. A secret report of the Chief of the GDR Air Forces mentions the delivery to “Soviet pilots”, an indication that it is highly probable that Soviet personnel in Syrian uniforms was employed in 1973.<sup>40</sup> Journalists called the actions of the State and Party Leader “Honecker’s war against Israel”<sup>41</sup>.

The military aid for Syria and other Arab states was undoubtedly an expression of the GDR antagonism against Israel. It cannot be denied nor belittled: the East Germans

delivered weapons to the archenemies of Israel. In addition to cited examples of assistance for Egypt and Syria, East Germany also delivered weapons and munition to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which Israel and the United States consider a terrorist organisation, and even more radical Palestine groups. There is no question: in view of the German history, in particular the German responsibility for the Holocaust, East Berlin walked on very thin ice with its weapons deliveries to the enemies of Israel. The aid for Syria, however, was not an expression of hostility towards Israel as the *Jewish* state; rather it was part of the East-West conflict. Senior officials in SED and NVA regarded the wars between Israel and its Arab neighbours primarily as part of the global East-West confrontation. The causes for the conflicts in the Middle East were and are much too diverse and complicated in order to press them into the pattern of the East-West conflict. But this unilateral fixation led the GDR alongside the Arab states to an antagonism against Israel.

The delivery of the MiG aircraft to Syrian Aleppo by NVA pilots is attributed to a Soviet directive. The transport in Soviet Antonov aircraft is clear evidence of it. Another proof is the "huge number of military aircraft" from other Eastern bloc states at Budapest airport according to contemporary witnesses. According to recent research<sup>42</sup>, Czechoslovakia, the People's Republics of Poland and Hungary also delivered twelve MiG-21 aircraft each. Soviet arms deliveries to Syria (and to Egypt) were much more extensive and to this day they are not entirely known in detail. It would also be interesting to know whether Romania also delivered weapons to Syria and/or Egypt in 1973 to provide support in the war against Israel.

### **Incalculable Risks**

Egypt's head of state Nasser was not the only one who urged East Berlin to deploy its fighter pilots. African and other Arab states also submitted requests for the deployment of NVA personnel. Military advisors, instructors and fighter pilots were of particular interest. In 1979 and 1980, Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda and his Minister of Defence Gray Zulu repeatedly asked for NVA operations in

their country. In concrete terms, the NVA pilots were to protect Zambian air space with their aircraft. The East German Minister of Defence Heinz Hoffmann immediately denied the request: in July 1979, the minister reported to Honecker that he denied the deployment of pilots and aircraft as "unfeasible".<sup>43</sup> Also in 1979 during a visit to the GDR, the head of the Zimbabwean liberation movement ZAPU Joshua Nkomo made a request for the deployment of NVA officers to ZAPU camps in Zambia. In his report to Honecker, Army General Hoffmann again rejected the deployment of NVA military personnel as "politically unacceptable". Instead, he referred to the possibility of providing military training in the GDR.<sup>44</sup>

Beyond the individual cases of Zambia and Zimbabwe, the rejection of the deployment of advisors, instructors and pilots showed a general policy of restraint of the East German armed forces. The uncovered sources allow for the conclusion that the GDR had a reserved or even negative attitude towards all requests and inquiries for the deployment of military personnel to third countries. The "state and party leadership" and in particular the NVA top brass saw the danger of the GDR being drawn with its soldiers into the conflicts and wars there, which was certainly not without reason. A direct involvement of NVA military personnel or even units into combat actions would probably have had far-reaching consequences, politically and militarily. This kind of operations abroad presented an unpredictable risk for the GDR.

The GDR nevertheless acted inconsistently on this issue. Although it did not deploy fighter pilots, major units or even formations, the NVA nevertheless was present abroad in individual cases: according to a confidential report of the East German Minister of Defence to Walter Ulbricht, by 1970, 15 NCOs and officers of the People's Navy had been deployed to Zanzibar to set up a coastal defence. Individual advisors and "experts" were also assigned to Angola and Iraq – mostly limited to a few weeks. The deployments of officers and transport aircraft pilots to Ethiopia and Mozambique were on a larger scale. In 1984, oppositional guerrilla fighters in Mozambique killed eight civilian development aid workers from the GDR in

addition to other foreigners. In response to this, in 1985 the NVA sent several groups of officers, some of them high-ranking including two generals, to Mozambique to act as advisors in the general staff and in commands, headquarters and units on site.

In addition to the ongoing assignments of officers in the country, the Mozambican government approached the GDR several times in 1985 and 1986 with the request for NVA trainers and “instructors.” In June 1986, Army General Keßler, who had succeeded Hoffmann as minister of defence, informed the SED Secretary General Honecker and Egon Krenz that he, too, was against such deployments: the deployment of “instructors” for training in Mozambique was not considered useful “for political reasons.”<sup>45</sup>

### **An ideal way? Training in the GDR instead of operations abroad**

From the mid-1970s on, the GDR usually accepted foreign requests for training support quite readily. Furthermore, the GDR in turn made increasingly active and deliberate efforts to offer training of military personnel in the NVA to selected partners. The statistics provided above show the percentage of training in the GDR military aid. A closer look at the origins of the military personnel trained in the GDR is even more telling. According to the results of the present study, the NVA had trained some 3,000 military personnel from 22 nations, that is from 19 regular armed forces and three armed formations or party armies.<sup>46</sup> The largest contingent was provided by the People’s Republic of the Congo with 424 service members, followed by Vietnam (390). According to this compilation, Syria had 355 service members trained in the GDR, Nicaragua 329, Libya 283 and Mozambique 281. All other partners followed with much smaller numbers: South Yemen 138, Cuba 130, Afghanistan 103, North Yemen 97, Ethiopia 79, North Korea 58, Laos 49, Zambia 44, Cambodia 30, Tanzania 28 and Zimbabwe 15. In 1989, the GDR air forces trained 14 pilots and 34 technicians for MiG-21 from Iran. Ten Iraqi sports officers were trained in 1977. 90 combatants of armed formations of the PLO were trained as officers, and six “officers” were trained for the

military branch of the Lebanese Druze party of Walid Jumblatt. Furthermore, 21 “cadres” of the Communist Party of Chile received military training in the NVA during the dictatorship of Pinochet.<sup>47</sup>

There was no uniform regulation for funding the expenses incurred. It ranged from full payment in foreign currency by the sending states to full absorption of costs by the GDR. Libya and Syria paid for the training of their military personnel in US Dollars. Tanzania also paid a share for the training of its future officers. For the other states and organisations, the GDR bore the expenses for training, often also for pocket money and other allowances. For some states like Afghanistan, Laos, Cambodia and Nicaragua, the GDR also paid for most of the flights. According to information of the NVA Main Chief of Service (*Hauptinspekteur*) of March 1990, the GDR government bore 86 percent of the total training costs.<sup>48</sup>

### **Scope of action of the GDR towards the Soviet Union and the coordination within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation**

An analysis of the decisions made in East Berlin and Strausberg in favor or against military aids for Africa, the Middle East and other parts of the world would not be complete without a view to another player: “Moscow”. Before making a decision on arms deliveries but also on other military contacts with third states, the leaders in Strausberg and East Berlin usually approached Moscow with a request for “expression of opinion”. Such request were usually addressed to the Soviet Ministry of Defence, in particular the Chief of the General Staff and occasionally the Minister. The deliveries of tanks, combat aircraft and armaments to Syria immediately at the end of the Yom Kippur War in 1973, in particular, were politically charged. It is obvious that the delivery of the twelve MiG-21 interceptors, 62 T-54A tanks and further extensive munitions was impossible without the approval of the Soviet party and/or military leadership. The letter from the Ministry of Defence to the Deputy Prime Minister Gerhard Weiß of November 1973 contains proof that the arrangements were indeed made. It reads “*as you already know*” the

“assistance deliveries of military equipment” to Syria in October this year were made “in coordination with the Soviet Army”.<sup>49</sup> References to consultations between the GDR Ministry of Defence and the Soviet general staff are already mentioned in the report by Army General Hoffmann to Honecker of 13 October 1973. In it, the Minister of Defence informs about “consultations” with the Chief of the General Staff of the armed forces of the USSR with regard to assistance for Syria and, as had initially been planned, Egypt. According to this, details of the sea transport from Rostock to Alexandria and Latakia were arranged, as was the change of the Friend-or-Foe identification system of the Dvina SAM System by Soviet “experts”. The report from Hoffmann to Honecker is very telling, it states that he “[had] been informed that no crews or operators [of the NVA] were to be provided” and that the GDR Armed Forces were to provide “only the escort” for the transport.<sup>50</sup>

The report shows that in 1973 the Soviet general staff had made the decision about a possible operation of GDR military personnel in Syria as tank and aircraft crews and as operators of SAM batteries. It had decided against it. At the same time, the Soviet military leadership obviously requested NVA escorts to hand over the tanks and aircraft in Syria. According to this, the delivery of the MiG aircraft to Syrian Aleppo by NVA pilots, which was already mentioned elsewhere in this paper, traces back to a Soviet directive. The report does not indicate whether the employment of NVA personnel as crews and operators had been envisaged or planned by GDR or by Soviet military leaders. Without consulting with Moscow, the GDR would hardly have agreed to such a controversial action. The “large number of military aircraft” from other Warsaw Pact states at Budapest airport also strongly suggested a coordinated action within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation under Soviet leadership.<sup>51</sup> The participation of the Soviet Union in the decision-making process regarding the assistance for Syria in October 1973 needs to be researched further. It would also be interesting to know whether, where and when the decision was made to deliver all NVA materiel originally intended for both Syria and Egypt to Syria

alone. The surviving correspondence between the East German Ministry of National Defence and the Soviet general staff and the Supreme Command of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation of 1973 does not contain any references to the assistance for Egypt/Syria in October 1973.<sup>52</sup> Due to the urgency of the deliveries, it cannot be assumed that the instructions were made through official military channels from Moscow to Strausberg. The report from Hoffmann to Honecker of 13 October 1973 does not contain a reference to an explicit order by Honecker. Instead of the usual “According to your directive [...]” his letter began with the rather unusual phrase “In accordance with the tasks assigned to me [...]”<sup>53</sup>. These tasks could also have come from Moscow. A participation or initiative of the Soviet leadership could also have taken place at the level of the political leadership of the GDR, probably Honecker himself. To date, no relevant documents have been researched. It is improbable, however, that after having received urgent and political requests from Assad for weapons, Honecker had not consulted the leadership in Moscow.

An analysis of the decisions for or against military aid from a GDR-specific or domestic perspective only would underestimate the historical context of the Cold War. The issue of a national scope of action of East Germany was therefore of particular interest for research. In general, the GDR coordinated its activities with the bloc’s leadership. The requests of the GDR Ministry of Defence for an “opinion” of the Soviet General Staff were a form of polite understatement. The requested statements of the Soviet military leadership were not only “of great use” for the NVA leadership – as one wording read – but also decisive for its actions – even constitutive. This was true for the military assistance as well as for nearly all fields of the East German foreign and security policy. The increasing distance of the leadership in East Berlin to the new Soviet policy under Gorbachev in the late 1980s cannot be disregarded as restricting and qualifying factors.

Not every case of coordination can be proved by archived documents. Nevertheless, it should be noted what Minister of Defence Hoffmann declared towards his Soviet coun-

terpart in 1978 and what the long-time Chief of the Main Staff, Colonel General Fritz Streletz, expressly confirmed when he was interviewed as a contemporary witness: “*The Ministry of Defence of the GDR has so far coordinated all deliveries and services regarding military support for developing countries with the general staff of the USSR.*”<sup>54</sup>

When interviewed as contemporary witness by the author, the former Chief of the Main Staff, Colonel General Fritz Streletz emphasised that military contacts and military assistance were never an individual effort of the GDR, all measures had been coordinated with the Soviet Union. The detailed arrangements with the Soviet Ministry of Defence were made via the correspondence of the Chief of the Main Staff and the Soviet Chief of the General Staff. Its results were submitted to the ministers to decide. Fritz Streletz also informed about the delineation of responsibilities between the Soviet General Staff and the Staff of the Unified Armed Forces of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. The Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces was responsible for all matters related to training and routine duty in peacetime. Operational matters and defence planning however were a responsibility of the Soviet General Staff, which was also the Staff of the Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Pact, who was also the Secretary General of the CPSU. Military relations and military assistance for the states of the Third World were of foreign political and global strategic interest, therefore, the Soviet General Staff held the reins in these matters, according to Streletz.<sup>55</sup> In his estimation, the GDR did have room for action in providing military assistance after the Soviet Union had agreed in principle: “whether” military assistance was provided had been decided in Moscow, “how” it was provided was left to the GDR and the other Warsaw Pact states to decide.<sup>56</sup> As Streletz remembers, coordination took place only between the GDR and the Soviet Union but not with the other Warsaw Pact states. At the same time, Streletz emphasised that not only the GDR but all Warsaw Pact states coordinated their military relations and military assistance for the Third World with the Soviet Union. But there had

been no distribution of tasks from the Soviet Union to the other Warsaw Pact states regarding the military assistance for the Third World, there was no pattern, no master plan as to who fulfills which task and who supports which country. Instead, individual decisions were made in agreement with the Soviet Union.<sup>57</sup> It had been occasionally suggested that each Eastern Bloc state had to support a country of the so-called Third World according to a “distribution scheme of Moscow”<sup>58</sup>, however, so far there are no sources confirming this and it seems rather improbable.

Soviet and East German military leaders met on the sidelines of the regular meetings of the Committee of the Defence Ministers for bilateral consultations.<sup>59</sup> In December 1979, the East German military assistance for the Third World was discussed. In the introduction, Minister Hoffmann stated that the cooperation of the NVA with the developing countries was expanded on “orders of the Party and State leadership of the GDR”, in the process the East German army always coordinated with the Soviet general staff. Hoffmann expressly thanked the Chief of the General Staff Ogarkov for the “permanent support and understanding for our problems”. Hoffmann’s thanks to Ogarkov confirms that the coordination processes primarily took place between the Chief of the Main Staff of the NVA and the Soviet Chief of the General Staff. Inquiries at the level of ministers focused on military-political issues of an explosive nature and personal reports of the minister. In concrete terms in 1979 Hoffmann asked the Soviet Minister of Defence for his approval of the training of Mozambiquan officers and NCOs as well as of the training of Libyan combat swimmers in the People’s Navy.<sup>60</sup>

The practice of reinsuring themselves continued in the 1980s. A possible cooperation between the NVA and the Iranian Army was clearly rejected by Ustinov in 1982: “*The Iranian leadership has an extremely negative attitude towards the assistance provided by the USSR in Afghanistan and uses the Islamic faith for this purpose. From the perspective of the Soviet Union, it would be advisable to refrain from an activation of the cooperation with the Iranian-Islamic Army.*”<sup>61</sup>

### **“Avoid being played off against each other”: the need for coordination within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation**

As early as in the 1960s, there was discord between the states of the Eastern Bloc regarding matters of military assistance, in particular weapons deliveries that went on the record. In 1965, the Romanian ambassador to Burma complained to his Soviet counterpart that the GDR and Czechoslovakia intended to deliver weapons to that country. Burma would use these weapons to take action against Communists. Romania therefore cautioned that it was necessary “to coordinate such details with the other socialist states in advance.”<sup>62</sup>

After his negotiations in Tripoli, Lieutenant General Borufka reported in 1978 that the socialist states had not established uniform fees for training. Rather, there was some kind of price war. Borufka criticised that Bulgaria permitted “significant discounts.”<sup>63</sup> The governments in the Third World knew how to take advantage of the lack of coordination within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

In May 1981, a delegation of the Iranian ministry of defence visited the GDR. The regime in Tehran urgently needed weapons of all kind for its defence war against Iraq. According to internal information of Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, East Germany’s chief procurer of foreign currency, in addition to the GDR Iranian military leaders also had negotiations with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Syria and North Korea.<sup>64</sup>

The Soviet leadership pressed for a decision. At the 11th Meeting of the Committee of the Defence Ministers<sup>65</sup> in East Berlin in December 1978, the Soviet Deputy Minister of Defence, Colonel General Sotov, submitted the draft for new principles and gave a presentation to explain the submission. After describing the global situation and the resulting need for providing general support for friendly developing countries in accordance with the principles and obligations of the “proletarian internationalism”, Sokolov went into detail. So far, military assistance had been provided to Ethiopia, Vietnam, Angola, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Libya and Algeria. Some countries had attempted to negotiate with several socialist states about military

assistance simultaneously. In doing so, they tried to achieve discounts for armament and equipment. In some cases, specialists from armies of other socialist states would have been called to repair damaged military equipment delivered by other Eastern Bloc states. This had led to the “development of distrust” and an “unhealthy” competition between the socialist states. At the same time, some Warsaw Pact states had attempted to divert and increase their export of armaments and equipment to third states from deliveries within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation without ensuring a sufficient equipment standard of their own armed forces. In addition, there were cases where military equipment was handed over to third parties without the approval of the manufacturing country. Furthermore, the principles of secrecy had been violated several times, confidential data had been passed on and unauthorised personnel had been granted access to equipment. Sotov mentioned Libya repeatedly and occasionally Iraq, Syria and Iran as specific examples. The Soviet general avoided naming the Eastern Bloc states in question, at least in the plenary session. The current state would generally damage the “unity and closeness of the states of the socialist community”. The main reason for all these negative incidents was the inadequate coordination within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. Therefore it was absolutely necessary to establish principles. Colonel General Sotov expressly referred to related proposals of the Hungarian and the East German ministers of defence.<sup>66</sup>

In October 1979, the topic was discussed once again at the working conference of the chiefs of the general staffs of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in Moscow.<sup>67</sup> According to information from Strausberg, the Romanian side had raised “several objections.”<sup>68</sup> In a slight modification of the draft, the adopted paper gave priority “first and foremost to the complete fulfillment of the coordinated demand” of the allied armed forces. The “consultations” intended in the draft were upgraded to a “systematic exchange of information and consultations.”<sup>69</sup>

The 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of the Defence Ministers in Warsaw in December 1979 ended the protracted and strongly

formalised decision-making and coordination procedures: the principles were adopted at the highest military level.<sup>70</sup> The published press release on the meeting did not contain any mention of the cooperation with developing countries.<sup>71</sup> The Romanian objections to relinquish the consideration of the military-political situation and consultations in the countries concerned and to entitle the paper “Suggestive recommendations” instead of “Principles” were disregarded.<sup>72</sup> In the Committee of Defence Ministers, each member had the same voting rights. There were isolated cases in which the Romanian representative refused to approve a decision. But this did not affect the liability for the other Warsaw Pact states.<sup>73</sup> Henceforth, only the formal approval of the heads of government was needed. After more than two years of consultations, coordination, submissions and eventually decisions, the “Principles of coordinated action of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation with respect to the military-technical cooperation with developing countries” were signed by the heads of government on 11 April 1980 and immediately put into force.<sup>74</sup>

Analysing the sources, the East German military commitment can be summarised in four theses. The GDR leadership was generally reserved and sceptical about requests and inquiries for the deployment of military personnel to Africa and the Middle East. The party and military leaderships acted cautiously: operations abroad presented an unpredictable risk for the GDR. The GDR and its armed forces did not take this risk – with a few minor exceptions. Instead, the NVA offered training in the GDR. The East German military foreign relations were not an independent effort. They were closely coordinated with Moscow. On a global scale and compared to the activities of other states, East Germany and its military were a minor player. If measured against its weak economy, East Germany was surprisingly active in the global South, often engaging in “acts of solidarity” which meant at its own expense. The surviving files show differences and tensions between the individual members of the bloc, in particular with the bloc’s leading power. The governments in Budapest, Bucharest or Prague were quite ready to defend

their own interests. The differences with respect to the military contacts with the Third World, in turn, show that the Warsaw Treaty Organization was not a monolithic bloc. East Germany’s foreign policy was within the gravitational field of the East-West conflict, firmly tied to the policy of the Eastern superpower. So its relations with developing countries and the military assistance given to them were also within this gravitational field.

As mentioned in this study, the GDR did not react on a global level alone. As a result, an adequate evaluation of the East-German commitment necessarily requires comparisons with the activities of other states in both blocks, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and not least Romania.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> “Wir haben euch Waffen und Brot geschickt“, in: *Der Spiegel*, 03 March 1980, 42-61 and title “Honeckers Afrika-Korps”. The concise headline had already been published in numerous articles before, even in the US press. The *Berliner Morgenpost* of 02 December 1975 entitled: “Military personnel of the ‘GDR’ also fight in the red Africa Corps”, the *Bayernkurier* of 17 June 1978 entitled “Honecker’s red Africa corps”, the Hamburg-based weekly *Die Zeit* wrote on 26 May 1978 “Hoffmann’s Africa Corps” and the *New York Times* wrote on 18 November 1979: “East German Afrika Korps: Force to Be Reckoned With”.

<sup>2</sup> Strauß reports 5,000 East German military personnel in Angola, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 02 December 1978.

<sup>3</sup> Moscow focuses military policy on Africa, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 08 February 1979 as well as: East Germany establishes new Africa Corps, a regiment of the Willy Sänger paratrooper unit was moved from Ethiopia to Angola, 5,000 East German mercenaries stationed in Angola, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 08 February 1979.

<sup>4</sup> According to *Die Welt*, the data were provided by Jürgen Todenhöfer, a member of the German Bundestag for the CDU, who had announced these “numbers based on information provided by Western intelligence services” at a meeting of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Cf. Honecker’s Africa Corps comprises 30,000 troops, *Die Welt*, 12 February 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Here Come Europe’s Cubans, in: *Time*, 21 April 1980, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Storkmann, Klaus, *Geheime Solidarität. Militärbeziehungen und Militärhilfen der DDR in die Dritte Welt*. Edited by Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, Berlin 2012 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, vol. 21).

<sup>7</sup> Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge 2007, aici in special p. 272-275.

<sup>8</sup> McMahon, Robert J., 'Heiße Kriege im Kalten Krieg,' in: *Heiße Kriege im Kalten Krieg*, edited by Bernd Greiner, Christian Th. Müller and Dierk Walter, Hamburg 2006 (= Studien zum Kalten Krieg, 1), 16-34, here S. 17f.

<sup>9</sup> Shubin, Vladimir, *The Hot 'Cold War': The USSR in Southern Africa*, London 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Losses of the opposite side were to be translated into profits for the own camp. The own commitment was subject to a cost-benefit-risk analysis. Even an indirect military confrontation with the United States was to be avoided. It was too great a risk. Therefore, the Eastern bloc exercised restraint in Latin America. Instead, the Warsaw Pact focused its activities on the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Here, the risk for the East seemed predictable, according to Volker Böge. Cf. Böge, Volker, *Militärische und militärisch relevante Aspekte der DDR-Südpolitik. Problemaufriss, Literaturbericht, Bibliographie*, Hamburg 1989 (=Arbeitspapiere Institut für politische Wissenschaft, Universität Hamburg, 32), 3.

<sup>11</sup> McMahon, *Heiße Kriege*, 24-28, here 24.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Katzer, Nikolaus, 'Ideologie und Pragmatismus in der sowjetischen Außenpolitik,' in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Beilage zur Wochenzeitung "Das Parlament", 59 (2009), Heft 1/2, 3 – 10, here 3.

<sup>14</sup> Zubok, Vladislav M., *A Failed Empire. The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, Chapel Hill, USA, 2007, here 227.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 249. Zubok quotes Zbigniew Brzezinski, who with a view to the Soviet interference in the Horn of Africa saw the policy of détente "buried in the sands of the Ogaden." Ibid., 228. Katzer's warning went in a similar vein: the Soviet commitment in the Third World had rather precarious consequences and put a strain onto the policy of détente towards the West. Katzer, *Ideologie und Pragmatismus*, 6.

<sup>16</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/3A/673, 674: SED Central Committee, Meeting of the Secretariat 09 September 1959, agenda item 39.

<sup>17</sup> For instance the inquiry of the "Government of the Congolese Liberation Movement" in Stanleyville (Zaire) 1964. AA-PA/MfAA/A 14593, p. 1-3: MfAA to Ulbricht, Stoph, Honecker, 14 December 1964.

<sup>18</sup> BArch, DZ 8/31 no pagination: Memorandum AASK 06 November 1964.

<sup>19</sup> BA-MA, VA-01/19230, p. 508f: MfNV, Hoffmann to Honecker, 10 November 1966, with a comment by Honecker "EH. 13 November 66" and other handwritten notes.

<sup>20</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1093: Meeting of the Politburo 10 January 1967, agenda item 15 and Annex. 5; also in: DY 30/J IV 2/2A/1200; DY 30/4709; BA-MA, AZN 32605.

<sup>21</sup> All four recipients received the same equipment and weapons, only in different numbers. The list ranged from blankets and steel helmets (Soviet models) to sniper rifles and light machine guns. SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2A/1093: Meeting of the Politburo 10 January 1967, agenda item 15 and Annex 5.

<sup>22</sup> For reasons of clarity, the deliveries to West African PAIGC are not included in this chart. SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2/1093: Meeting of the Politburo 10 January 1967, agenda item 15 and Annex. 5.

<sup>23</sup> BArch, DC 20/17264, p. 1-3: Stoph to Soliman, 08 June 1967 (Original with Stoph's signature); also in DC 20/4537, p. 39-40 (copy).

<sup>24</sup> SAPMO-BArch, NY 4182/1337, p. 95-111: Memorandum by Gerhard Weiß of a conversation with President Nasser, Cairo, 09 Juli 1967.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> SAPMO-BArch, NY 4182/1337, p. 112-124: Report by Gerhard Weiß about talks in UAR, 06 to 11 July 1967, here p. 115f.

<sup>30</sup> According to Andrea Timm and others, a comparison of the small supplies of military technology and weapons from the GDR with the extensive supplies provided by other socialist states, primarily the Soviet Union, almost marginalised the East German contribution. Cf. Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*, 214; Similarly: Troche, *Ulbricht und die Dritte Welt*, 66. Troche, in turn, referred to the thesis of Ronald Hirschfeld of 1978. Cf. Hirschfeld, *Beziehungen*, 170.

<sup>31</sup> SAPMO-BArch, NY 4182/1337, p. 164-176: Protocol Talk Ulbricht – Ali Sabri, Moscow, 08 November 1967 (marked "Streng geheim" (Top Secret)), here p. 171. On this also already: Timm, *Hammer, Zirkel, Davidstern*; 215.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> "The GDR itself did not produce any weapons [...] because the states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation are uniformly equipped with Soviet weapons. It would not make any sense for us to deliver Soviet weapons to the UAR. Those could be better

procured directly from the Soviet Union.” SAPMO-BArch, NY 4182/1337, p. 164-176, here p. 174.

<sup>34</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3666, p. 114f: Ulbricht to Honecker, 17 October 1969 and Honecker’s reply of 24 October 1969.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> “I ask you to read the enclosed letter to Comrade Brezhnev and to communicate with the other comrades of the Politburo (but do not have it copied for circulation), in addition Comrades Hoffmann and Mielke should read it.” Honecker answered that the Politburo as well as Hoffmann and Mielke had given their consent. SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3666, p. 114f: Ulbricht to Honecker, 17 October 1969 and Honecker’s reply of 24 October 1969.

<sup>37</sup> Ulbricht: “Should the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU deem that such a situation has arisen, we would like to suggest a meeting of the First Secretaries to be convened in Moscow.” Cf. SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3666, p. 154f: Ulbricht to Ambassador Abrasimov, 03 February 1970 (in German and Russian).

<sup>38</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/114483, p. 169-172: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Honecker, 13 October 1973, incl. comment “EH. Einverstanden [agreed], 14 October 83” and a new countersignature by Hoffmann.

<sup>39</sup> BArch, DC 20/13070, p. 225f: MfNV, Fleißner, to Weiß, 26 November 1973. Sum total also indicated in BA-MA, DVW 1/114483, p. 190-192: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Axen, 01 November 1973.

<sup>40</sup> For more details, see: Storkmann, Klaus, ‘Geheimoperation Aleppo. DDR-Waffen für Syrien im Krieg gegen Israel 1973’, in: *Militärgeschichte. Zeitschrift für historische Bildung* 1/2016, 22 – 23.

<sup>41</sup> Meining, Stefan, *Honeckers Krieg gegen Israel*, ARD broadcast “Report aus München, 06 October 2008”, <http://www.br-online.de/das-erste/report-muenchen/report-aleppo-israel-ID1223205037854.xml>;

Meining, Stefan, *Geheimoperation Aleppo. Die geheime Beteiligung der DDR am Oktober-Krieg 1973, Background information to the TV report “Honeckers Krieg gegen Israel”*, ARD programme “Report aus München” of 06 October 2008. <http://www.br-online.de/content/cms/Universalseite/2008/01/24/cumulus/BR-online-Publikation--212912-20081007145615.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> For more details, see: Storkmann, Klaus, *Geheime Solidarität* (Ibid. 6).

<sup>43</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/2A/2237: Meeting of the Politburo 12 June 1979, Agenda item 11, Annex 10, Report of Military delegation to Zambia, Mozambique and Egypt, here p. 82, 86; Also in: BA-MA, AZN 32638, p. 135-154: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Honecker, 07 June 1979, here p. 146, 153.

<sup>44</sup> BA-MA, AZN 32638, p. 163-165: MfNV, Hoffmann, Memorandum of a conversation with J. Nkomo, 18 June 1979.

<sup>45</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/298, p. 280-283: MfNV, Keßler, to Honecker, copy to Krenz, 19 June 1986; also in: BA-MA, AZN 32 649, p. 39-42, with Honecker’s note of agreement of the same day.

<sup>46</sup> On this in greater detail: Storkmann, *Geheime Solidarität*.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> BA-MA, AZN 32 325, no pagination: MfNV, *Hauptinspekteur* to Chief of the Main Staff (*Chef des Hauptstabes*), 20 March 1990.

<sup>49</sup> BArch, DC 20/13070, p. 225f: MfNV, Colonel General Fleißner, to Deputy Prime Minister Gerhard Weiß, 26 November 1973.

<sup>50</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/114483, p. 169-172: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Honecker, 13 October 1973, incl. comment “EH. Einverstanden [agreed] 14 October 83”.

<sup>51</sup> Lang, Dietbert und Horst Materna, *Der Flugplatz Neuhardenberg-Marxwalde-Neuhardenberg. Vom geheimen Einsatzhafen des Dritten Reiches zum Regierungsflughafen der DDR*, Berlin 2004, 45 and 50. Although Meining mentions the circumstance of the transport, the other aircraft in Budapest and even – presumably – Soviet pilots in Syrian uniforms, he does not draw the conclusion of the Soviet initiative or coordination of the action. Cf. Meining, Stefan, *Geheimoperation Aleppo. Die geheime Beteiligung der DDR am Oktober-Krieg 1973, Hintergrundinformationen zum TV-Bericht “Honeckers Krieg gegen Israel”*, shown in the ARD programme “Report aus München” on 06 October 2008. <http://www.br-online.de/content/cms/Universalseite/2008/01/24/cumulus/BR-online-Publikation--212912-20081007145615.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> BA-MA, AZN 28054 and AZN 28056.

<sup>53</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/114483, p. 169-172.

<sup>54</sup> BA-MA, AZN 30552, p. 14f: MfNV, Hoffmann, to MOD USSR, Ustinov, 21 February 1978.

<sup>55</sup> Interview of contemporary witness Colonel General (NVA) (ret.) Fritz Streletz, Strausberg, 12 March 2009.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> So for instance in: Smolorz, Roman, *Ostmitteleuropa im Kalten Krieg 1945-1989*, Conference Report, International Conference East-Central Europe in the Cold War, 1945–1989, Warsaw, 16–18 October 2008, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=2342&count=2304&recno=105&sort=datum&order=down>.

<sup>59</sup> Streletz, Fritz, ‘Der Nationale Verteidigungsrat der DDR und das Vereinte Kommando des Warschauer Vertrages’, in: *Rührt euch! Zur Geschichte der Nationalen Volksarmee der DDR*,

edited by Wolfgang Wünsche, Berlin 1998, 130-173, here 154.

<sup>60</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/71036, p. 351-371: *Mögliche Probleme für die Beratung des MfNV der DDR mit dem MfV der UdSSR, Warschau, Dezember 1979*; Bl 522f: *Beitrag für das Gespräch MfNV mit MfV UdSSR*, presumably prepared by the Chief of the Main Staff.

<sup>61</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/5223, p. 19-28: Memo Talk Hoffmann – Ustinov, no date, signed off by Honecker 07 April 1982.

<sup>62</sup> Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (Political Archive of the Foreign Office) (PA-AA) MfAA/C 127/73, p. 18: Generalkonsulat der DDR in Burma (GDR Consulate General in Burma), Memo, 19 August 1965.

<sup>63</sup> BA-MA, AZN 32637, p. 120-123: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Honecker, 13 April 1978.

<sup>64</sup> SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/3177, p. 71-74: Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski to Günter Mittag, 12 May 1981.

<sup>65</sup> According to Fritz Strelitz, the Committee of the Defence Ministers, which had been founded in 1969, played an outstanding role in the decision-making process within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. It met at least once a year. In addition to the ministers of defence, it included the Supreme Commander and the Chief of Staff of the Unified Armed Forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation. The Committee was not chaired by the Soviet representative but by the hosting minister. Strelitz, Fritz, 'Der Nationale Verteidigungsrat der DDR und das Vereinte Kommando des Warschauer Vertrages,' in: *Rührt euch! Zur Geschichte der Nationalen Volkssarmee der DDR*, edited by Wolfgang Wünsche, Berlin 1998, 130-173, here 154. Each member had equal voting rights. There were individual instances where the Romanian representative refused to agree with a decision. This did not affect the obligation for the other Warsaw Pact states, however. Brühl, *Gefolge Moskaus*, 36.

<sup>66</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/71035: Protocol of the 11th Meeting of the Committee of Defence Ministers of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, 04 - 07 December 1978, East-Berlin, Agenda item 4, here p. 318-357: Speech and theses of Colonel General Sotov.

<sup>67</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/71036, p. 439f: MfNV, Strelitz, memo, 27 November 1979; p. 466: Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces of the

Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, Kulikov, to MfNV, Hoffmann, 05 November 1979.

<sup>68</sup> "It is to be expected that reservations will also be made at the meeting [in Warsaw]." BA-MA, DVW 1/71036, p. 449-459: MfNV, Hoffmann, to Honecker, 15 November 1979.

<sup>69</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/71035, here p. 359-377: Draft of Principles; BStU, MfS, AGM 580, p. 1-12: Grundsätze der Koordinierung der Handlungen der Teilnehmerstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages bei der Verwirklichung der militärtechnischen Zusammenarbeit mit den Entwicklungsländern (Principles of coordinated action of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty with respect to military-technical cooperation with developing countries) of 11 April 1980.

<sup>70</sup> BA-MA, DVW 1/71036 und 1/71037: Protocol of the 12th Meeting of the Committee of Defence Ministers of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, 02-06 December 1979, Warsaw, agenda item 5.

<sup>71</sup> *Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, edited by Institut für Internationale Beziehungen an der Akademie für Staats- und Rechtswissenschaften der DDR, Potsdam-Babelsberg in cooperation with the GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, here *Jahresband (Annual volume) 1979* (vol. XXVII), Berlin 1984, 170.

<sup>72</sup> BA-MA, AZN 32639, p. 148-154: MfNV, Hoffmann: Report about the most important results of the 12th Meeting of the Committee of Defence Ministers of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, 2 - 6 December 1979, with comment "circulation in Politbüro. EH. [Erich Honecker] 9 December 79", here p. 152.

<sup>73</sup> Reinhard Brühl, *Im Gefolge Moskaus? Sowjetischer Einfluss und Eigenständigkeit in der Militärpolitik der SED*. In: *Im Gleichschritt? Zur Geschichte der NVA*. Edited by Walter Jablonsky and Wolfgang Wünsche, Berlin 2001, p. 11-67, here p. 36.

<sup>74</sup> BA-MA, AZN 30557, p. 106f: Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces of the Member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, Marshal Kulikov, to MfNV, Hoffmann, 08 May 1980; BStU, MfS, AGM 580, p. 1-12: Principles of coordinated action of the member states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation with respect to the military-technical cooperation with developing countries of 11 April 1980, signed on behalf of Stoph by Werner Krolkowski.

# ROMANIAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES. CASE STUDY: SIRIUS GROUP

SORIN CRISTESCU, PhD

An important chapter of contemporary history is represented by the military assistance given by the Warsaw Treaty member states to African countries, particularly to those states in which, after they proclaimed their independence, political power was seized by Marxist or socialist-oriented regimes. For Romania this military assistance was possible after Romania decided to pursue an autonomous foreign policy course in 1964 and especially after 1968, when Romania led by Nicolae Ceaușescu decided not to partake in the invasion of Czechoslovakia in order to suppress the reformatory movement known as “the Prague Spring”, unlike the other countries of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. The documentary material concerning this topic is vast, but the restrictions on declassification of documents make the scientific research much more difficult.

Starting with the first month of Nicolae Ceaușescu’s government, more precisely in August 1965, the first military contacts between Romania and Republic of Guinea took place on the occasion of a visit by Defence Minister of Guinea, Fodéba Keïta (1921-1969), on the invitation of his counterpart, Leontin Sălăjan (1913-1966). During the visit of the official from Guinea, several meetings took place at the Ministry of Armed Forces and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and on the 24th of August he was received in audience by the President of the State Council, Chivu Stoica (1908-1975).<sup>1</sup> Apparently the purpose of this visit was to obtain military aid from the Romanian state, represented by materials and equipment, which was actually delivered at the beginning of the following year.<sup>2</sup>

In September 1968, a military coup was staged in the Republic of Congo by Marien Ngouabi (December 31, 1938 – March 18,

1977), who assumed dictatorial powers on 31st of December 1968. The new leader changed the name of the country to the People’s Republic of Congo, a name that was kept until 1991. He declared that his country was the first Marxist Leninist State in Africa and the party The National Revolutionary Movement was renamed the Congolese Party of Labour. [*Parti Congolais du Travail*].

At the beginning of 1972, a rapprochement took place between Romania and the People’s Republic of Congo, as a result of the arrival in Romania of a delegation of the Congolese Party of Labour led by Ange Édouard Pongui (n. 1942), a member of the Politbureau of the party and Minister of Finance of Congo.

It seems that the visit by the Congolese Party delegation also had secret purpose, more exactly to request military aid represented by all types of equipment including weapons and the sending of Romanian specialists to Africa in order to instruct a number of Congolese police and security troops.

To this purpose the Congolese officials requested aid amounting to 60.808.096 lei, and the Romanian State granted an aid amounting to 7.962.750 lei, and decided to send 6 to 8 security officers belonging to Ministry of Internal Affairs to Congo in order to train members of Congolese military to be included in the structures of the Congolese State Security. It was also suggested the a Congolese military should be invited to Romania in order to discuss all the relevant technical details and the presence of a representative of the Romanian Army in the Romanian delegation that was going to tour a number of African countries.

The exact requests of the Congolese and the answer of the Romanian government are included in Annex 15<sup>3</sup>:

# **The list of the aid requested by the Congolese and our proposals**

## I. MEANS OF TRANSPORT

<b>Requests</b>	<b>Proposals</b>
30 trucks "Carpați"	6 trucks "Carpați"
60 all-terrain vehicles M-461	10 all-terrain vehicles M-461
10 special security and police cars	none
20 police motorbikes	10 MOBRA motorbikes
20 bicycles	10 bicycles

## II. WEAPONRY AND AMMUNITION

5000 AKM assault rifles and ammunition cartridges	1000 assault rifle AKM 600.000 cartridges
1000 pistols TT-33	none
5.000 rifles SKS	none
1000 assault rifles	none
500 machine guns	none
50 launchers 82 mm	none
6.000 tear gas grenades	none

## III. EXPLOSIVES AND ACCESSORIES

4 tons of TNT in 200 gram chunks	4 tons TNT in 200 gram chunks
100 km of slow burning fuse	100 km of slow burning fuse
500 km of detonating fuse	none
15.000 pyrotechnic detonators	13.000 pyrotechnic detonators
10.000 electric detonators	10.000 electric detonators
15.000 pyrotechnic lighters	2.000 pyrotechnic lighters
10.000 anti-tank mines	10.000 anti-tank mines
300 blasting machines	none
5000 crimping pliers	300 crimping pliers

## IV. OPTICAL EQUIPMENT

1.500 compasses	500 compasses
500 binoculars 8x30	none
10 still picture cameras	5 still cameras
5 motion picture cameras	none
4 projectors	4 epidiascopes

It should be emphasised that Romania began to pay more attention to African countries after 1971-1972, and established close ties to African National Congress.<sup>4</sup> Forging closer links to Africa was common for European Communist countries in this period due to a more relaxed approach by Moscow after 1971. A telegram from Moscow (17th February 1971) emphasised that in a communiqué to the President of the Association of USSR Friendship with European Communist states, Africa was seen as an important objective in Soviet foreign policy due to its mineral reserves, including oil. Communist country policy toward Africa had to be coordinated “in order to avoid competition and cover more African countries and, if possible, the entire continent.”<sup>5</sup> In 1972-1973, various Communist countries from Eastern Europe decided to expand relations with Africa, unilaterally or bi- or multilaterally.<sup>6</sup>

An important moment was in 1972 between March 11 and April 6, with the visit of the Romanian communist leader N. Ceaușescu and his wife to eight African Countries: Algeria, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zaire, Zambia, Tanzania, Sudan and Egypt.

In Tanzania, Ceausescu had a meeting with an African National Congress (ANC) delegation, led by Alfred Baphethuxolo Nzo (1925-2000), General-Secretary of the ANC. They emphasized their solidarity in the struggle against apartheid and imperialism.

Later, in November 1972, an ANC delegation led by Nzo visited Romania. Nzo informed the Romanian Communist leadership that the Revolutionary Council of ANC decided “to infiltrate the country with more military trained cadres and military equipment”. He also pointed out that: “we decided to increase our activity and revive illegal organizations with more highly qualified cadres from outside, able to act promptly and provide qualified leadership.”<sup>7</sup> In a memorandum from Zola Ngcakani, the ANC stated that they required 164.750 US dollars for 1973 and they asked Romania to assist with a portion of it. In addition, they requested items like blankets, watches, bicycles (15 pieces), all-terrain vehicles (3 pieces), scholarships for higher education, medical treatment for ANC cadres and military equipment (not specified).<sup>8</sup>

At the end of the visit, Nzo met Ceaușescu who promised “our entire support, our entire solidarity in your struggle” and asked for a better relationship between the two parties.<sup>9</sup>

The visit was fruitful to the ANC and was a new stage in their relationship. It prepared the way for a visit of Oliver Tambo (1917-1993) to Romania in April 1973. Tambo and Ceaușescu met on 25th April 1973. During the discussions he raised the issue of military support from Romania, specified weapon procurement and produced a list of requests. He also asked for Romanian expertise in the reorganization of the propaganda and relations departments of the ANC. In response, Ceaușescu offered full support to the ANC and explained his ideas concerning the further development of the struggle against apartheid.

Bucharest soon delivered on its promises. On 13<sup>th</sup> of February 1973, 5.000 US dollars were given to ANC in Dar es Salaam and on 21st of March ANC representatives were informed that, two weeks earlier, the Yugoslav ship *Primrose* departed from Rijeka (Yugoslavia) with two Romanians all-terrain vehicles on board.<sup>10</sup>

Delivering other goods in support of the ANC was more complicated. Uncertainty existed about Somalia as a transit point, as Somali officials were asking about the content of the shipments. On 31st of October 1973, the Somali military attaché in Moscow provided details, stating the address to be used should be the “National Defence Ministry of the Republic of Somalia.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, in April 1974, a Romanian ship departed from the port of Constanța, with a shipment for the Somali Ministry of Defence. It consisted of 136 boxes (6 tons) and, according to plan, it reached Mogadishu on 3rd of May 1974.<sup>12</sup> Bucharest requested that an ANC representative be present to receive it. A further shipment (33 boxes of food and a 4 tonne truck) was transported by the Yugoslav ship *Murter* from Constanța to Tanzania.<sup>13</sup>

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While Moscow offered Romania her consent to offer military aid, it was however secret, but it was not possible to avoid some incidents as it was the visit of the first president

of independent Mozambique, Samora Moises Machel (b. 1933, president between 1970-1986), to Bucharest between 15th and 21st December 1974. On this occasion, the African president thanked in his very speech addressed to Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu for the weapons and ammunition they had got, causing panic in the audience and prompting the urgent deletion of this fragment from the video recordings of the meeting.<sup>14</sup> Romania's covert military support of Africa countries contrasted to the official statements made by Ceaușescu on "*the Romanian policy of peace and friendship with all the nations and countries in the world, irrespective of their social systems*".

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An important operation was the so-called Sirius operation, the first mission of the Romanian Army after WWII<sup>15</sup>, in which Romania undertook the mission of training military pilots for the young People's Republic of Angola, the name that the present day Republic of Angola had between 1975 and 1992.

Angola too was a country torn by a civil war, each of the two main forces being supported from abroad, but the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola or MPLA, a Marxist party which was supported by the Cuban forces, proclaimed itself the de facto government of the country when the independence of the country was declared in November 1975 and Agostinho Neto (1922-1979) became the first president of the country (11 November 1975 – 10 September 1979).

Under these circumstances, the new government wanted to train a number of military pilots, and for this purpose requested the support of USSR, France, Portugal, Yugoslavia, Switzerland and Romania, and organized a kind of auction, inviting each country to list their conditions. The auction was won by Romania; it seems that an important role in accepting Romanian conditions was played by the deputy Minister of Defence, who was in charge of the Aviation of Angola and the Defence of its territory. His name was Gato and he had studied at the Petroleum Institute in Ploiești.

The conditions listed by Romania could be thus summarized:

- a training period shorter than two years;
- three types of aircraft 12 IAR 823 engine planes, a squadron of six two-engines planes BN2 with "Lycoming" engines and 6 IAR 316B "Alouette" helicopters; all planes were made in Romania and bought by the Angolans. The total value of the contract amounted of 32 million US dollars.

The personnel that was going to be trained fell into several categories:

- flight personnel;
- commanders and staff personnel;
- technical personnel;
- logistic personnel.

After the political decision was made, the mission was assigned to the Ministry of National Defence led then by general Ion Coșman (b. 1926 - ?). The latter entrusted general Zărnescu (1926-2009) with this mission, he was commander of military Air Forces, and he assigned general Dumitru Balaur, his deputy, the mission to create the nucleus of the operation. Recruiting specialists from various fields was the task of the Romanian Institute of Management Romconsult, led by an engineer called Cristinel Vâlcu. This was the channel through such specialists could be sent abroad. In charge of the Angolan mission was the engineer Titus Orădean, a specialist who had spent several years in Angola on a UN mission. He was the person who lectured Romanian instructors on Angola, on its climate, population, and their mentalities, as well as on rules of conduct.

The peculiarity of this mission was the represented by the fact that a list of positions was drawn including 150 personnel (commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, civilians among which 10 translators) and only then the commander of the mission was appointed.

From a managerial point of view, the tactical unit SIRIUS included specialized structures that made possible for the projected training process to be carried out in optimal conditions:

- the command of the group;
- the general staff;
- the training section;
- the theoretical training section and the flight training section which included two squadrons:

a) 1st Flight Squadron (phase I) equipped with 12 IAR823 planes

b) 2nd Flight Squadron equipped with six BN2 light transport planes and 6 IAR- 316B helicopters

– the medical department;

– the logistics department, including the maintenance of military equipment.

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At the end of 1978 general Dumitru Balaur appointed the actual commander of the mission, General Aurel Niculescu, who had occupied a year before, for a period of six weeks (1<sup>st</sup> of May – 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1977), the position of head of the Military Air Forces and at that time he was deputy commander of the Antiaircraft Territory Defence. The most important fact about his appointment was that this general had been for ten years (1961-1971) the commander of the “Aurel Vlaicu” Military School of Aviation in Boboc, near the town of Buzău.

It was also in Buzău that the group of flight instructors started to be created. Because close to Buzău there is a mountain called Siriu, the group was named after it, but this will be changed in Angola, by adding the letter “s” and will thus get the name of the brightest star that can be seen on the sky with the naked eye: Sirius. Another reason for that was to prevent any analogy with Romania.

At the beginning of 1979, at the Boboc Aviation School, the training of the instructors began. They were taught intensive courses of Portuguese and courses in all the subjects that they were to teach in Angola: navigation, engines, management.<sup>16</sup> The courses were written in Romanian and translated into Portuguese by specialized teachers and Romanian instructors studied them in this language. At the end of 1979 and the beginning of 1980 the instructors were already fluent in Portuguese and already communicated between them in this language on certain flights, thus arousing the concern of the flight controllers.

Also in 1979, while the instructors were trained, two Romanian visits to Angola took place: the first delegation was led by general Zărnescu, the commander of the Military Aviation, and included generals Dumitru Balaur

and Aurel Niculescu. They flew on a TAROM plane to Rome and from there they boarded on an Angolan airliner. The goal of the mission was to check if the location suggested by the Angolan party for organizing the future flight school was appropriate; on this occasion, the contract was signed, the Romanian party being represented by general Zărnescu. A place called Lobito, on the Atlantic shore about 200 km south of Luanda, the capital of the country, also on the Atlantic shore, which had been suggested by the Angolans as location for the future flight school, was visited by the Romanian delegation. However, the Romanians noticed that there was only a landing strip and a single control tower, the hangars and dwellings were to be built later.

Immediately after this visit, the Romanian party sent to Angola a commission of experts from the Aeronautical Medicine Institute led by colonel doctor Maurică Stoian, who had the mission to perform a medical check-up and select the first 150 future instructors pilots and the flight attendants, members of the military who were to represent the personnel and the commanding staff of the school.<sup>17</sup>

As such buildings could not be erected in a single year, the Angolans made another suggestion, namely that the respective school should be organized on the airfield Negage, the province of Uige, where Portuguese flight units had been stationed until 1975. This place was 120 km north-west of Luanda. A second visit of generals Balaur and Niculescu was organized: the Romanian party were to inspect the location. Indeed, the necessary buildings existed in Negage: a concrete landing strip 1200 meters long, placed on top of a hill, hangars, officers’ mess, bedrooms. They decided to build a number of classrooms in the annexes of the hangars, a total of eight such rooms for pilots, navigators, technicians and logistics personnel, staff officers and commanding unit. The Romanians instructors were to live close to the town of Negage in a former hotel. An important part in accomplishing this mission was assigned to the Romanian Ambassador in Luanda, Ion Moraru, who had friendly relations with the Angolan leadership, in particular with the man who had taken over after

the death of Agostinho Neto, Jose Eduardo dos Santos (born 1942), who was the president of Angola from September 1979 to September 2017.

The participants in the mission of the Sirius group had to abide by a number of the strict rules: besides the fact that they were forbidden to discuss with strangers, this interdiction existed in Romania too, such conversations could only take place in the presence of and through a translator in order for errors and misinterpretations to be avoided. Also banned were even the conversations with citizens of the Warsaw Treaty member states – whether Soviet or Bulgarian – as well as with members of the Cuban military who were on mission in Angola.

A special challenge was represented by the transportation of the materials for the mission: the furniture and the aircraft. The latter were dismantled and packed in boxes which were waterproof, due to the increased humidity that is typical of subequatorial regions, and shipped to Angola on a cargo boat on a trip that was to last about 15 days. Two light transport trucks were also shipped and as well as six cistern. In charge of the transport was Colonel Gh. Tănase, the chief engineer of the group, and Colonel Macri, head of logistics, who also boarded that ship. Most of the group flew to Angola on a Boeing 707 plane of the Angolan Airliner, on 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1981. They were dressed in civilian clothes, their military uniforms had been shipped on the cargo boat. The group was reunited in Negage.

The boxes that included the dismantled planes were downloaded in the port Luanda, then taken to the capital's airport. There a team of technicians waited for them; they reassembled the planes and helicopters that were subsequently flown to Negage.

The first problem they have to solve in Negage was the preparing the barracks and the dwellings, an activity that put to the ultimate test the DIY qualities of each member of the group. Then a special working uniform was designed for the members of the group, as well as a special badge with the ENAM initials (“Ecole Nationale d’Aviação Militar”) and arm badge to replace the rank insignia. We should also mention that, unlike the Soviet, Bulgarian and

Cuban soldiers in the area, the members of the Sirius group did not carry weapons or ammunition with them. Subsequently, the relations with the Soviets made possible for the Romanians to be equipped with AK 47 weapons, but on the order they received from home through our embassy they had to relinquish these weapons. The creation of an Angolan guard was not accepted either, as they were afraid the respective soldiers might be persuaded to join the anti-government forces.

Training courses began on 11<sup>th</sup> of February 1981, with a ceremony attended by important political personalities in Luanda, the highest official being the Angolan Minister of Defence, Samuel Pedala, and his deputy, Gato. This was followed by a flight demonstration with IAR 823 plane, flown by General Niculescu himself. The Angolan commander of the School was Captain Bonga d’Aço, who was not a pilot at that time, but became one later. The commanding staff and the personnel of the school was Angolan.

The first class that graduated included 146 students, out of whom 54 were student pilots, 18 were staff students, 77 were aviation technicians, 13 were meteorologists and 7 were specialized in airfield logistics. Worth mentioning is also the fact that the level of the students’ previous training was that of secondary school 7 – 8 years, which made it difficult for them to understand technical problems such as the aerodynamics of flying, aviation engines, flight navigation, meteorology. The next year’s class had roughly the same number of students. After a number of managerial problems were solved, having to do with the students’ punctuality, the training continued without special problems.

It is worth mentioning that the food for Sirius group was provided by Romania, and it was sent to Angola by air every month.

The period of exclusively theoretical training ended on 18<sup>th</sup> of May 1981, when flight courses started. The methodology of the Romanian Aviation School was used: tarmac tours, zonal tours, area tours, formation flights, then aerobatics, parachuting drills with the Romanian BG-7 parachute, the students being parachuted from IAR 316B helicopters. Starting with the very first year, dog fight exercises were

introduced, as well as targeting of terrestrial objectives – visual simulation shootings on the training area next to the airfield with IAR 823 aircraft. In the commanding unit, there were organized shifts and towards the end of the year, an alarm system was introduced, also based on IAR 823 aircraft. Though there was no radiolocation service, radio interceptions were organized. At the end of the training year each student had performed 250 flight hours. A flight demonstration was organized with IAR 823 planes and IAR 316B helicopters.

The only tragic incident took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 1981 when a plane crashed having on board Major Gh. Preda and an Angolan student Ruy Nelson Botelho. Both men died instantly. A cenotaph<sup>18</sup> was built for them with the traditional propeller blades.

The first year ended in late November 1981. The Sirius Group returned to Romania in smaller groups for the winter holidays, and in early January 1982 they went back to Negage. The decision was made that Romanians should be the advisors of the Angolan they have trained, while the later in their turn should train the new classes of students, the whole process being, however, supervised by the Romanians.

A special problem of this year that is worth mentioning was the fact that in March 1982, a group of 20 of the best students had to go on a war mission before the end of the courses. They were sent to southern Angola on fight mission over the area controlled by rival factions. Then, in September 1982, at the request of the Angolan party, a mixed Romanian and Angolan team was formed on board of a two-engine BN2 plane, having the mission to carry several East German officers and radio equipment to the northern border of the country.

Flying above the clouds, the plane inadvertently landed beyond the border, in Zaire, a country that was an enemy of Angola. The aviators were arrested, interrogated, but due to diplomatic negotiations the crew and the Germans returned several weeks later to Negage, but the airplane remained in Zaire.

The flight courses ended on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1982. The promotion of the second year of teaching students was fully patented, each student performing an average of 250 flight hours.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1982, the entire promotion of the second year completed the school courses, all the students being advanced to the rank of first lieutenant. The closing ceremony of the mission, which marked the graduation of the first promotion of aviation officers, from different military specialties in independent Angola, was held in the presence of the Minister of Defence and other military and civilian personalities of the country, the aerial demonstration executed by the graduating officers proving the professionalism of the Romanian military aviation instructors. During the graduation ceremony, the Romanian commander of the school, General Aurel Niculescu, handed over his effective command and all the military material to the Angolan Government. Thus, an exceptional mission of the Aviation School in Romania was concluded. For General Niculescu, this will be the moment of the last flight, made on board an IAR-823 aircraft, marking the end of a long career of 40 and a half years. Returning to Romania, the general resumed his position as Deputy Commander of the Antiaircraft Territorial Defence for the combat aircraft department. Several years later his retired.

The Sirius Group came back to Romania on 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1982. No ceremony was organized for their arrival and no mention was made on their activity in Angola.

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Worth of mentioning is the fact that between 1982 and 1984, around 75 military members belonging to ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) received fighter pilot training at the Romanian Air Force Base Boboc.

During the 1980s, the number of members that graduated Romanian military schools from southern African countries increased dramatically.<sup>19</sup> A quick survey in the military archives indicated that, for example, in 1981, 323 students from Zimbabwe attended various military courses.<sup>20</sup> Between 1979 and 1982 about 200 students from Madagascar graduated in Romania from various military schools. By August 1984, the Air Force School had enrolled 23 pilots from Zimbabwe. At the beginning

of 1980s, 259 students, sent by ZAPU to do short courses (three or four months) in diverse military fields of expertise, were in Romania. As a matter of fact, Communist Romania has trained thousands of military members from southern African countries (Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Zaire and Zambia) to become officers able to command up brigade or division level and also produced military specialists in various fields. Between 1977 and 1982 alone, about 2.500 students from Zimbabwe graduated at Romanian military schools.

It is worth mentioning that according to a list of graduates of the Romanian Military Academy, covering the period 1974-1989, there were 72 graduates (mostly engineers) from Madagascar, 14 from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (mostly officers trained for the decision making level as well as radar engineers), 5 from Zimbabwe (air force engineers) and 4 from Zambia (armoured engineers). Almost 100 military specialists were trained in accordance with the Romanian educational curricula, which made possible to contribute to the liberation struggle in the region and to develop the militaries of newly independent countries.<sup>21</sup>

It is obvious that more in-depth research will provide more data on the support Communist Romania provided to the liberation movements from southern Africa during the 1980s.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bogdan-Iulian Ranteş, *Relațiile României cu state din Africa ecuatorială și de vest (1960 – 1974)*, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2017, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign Affairs Ministry Archive, The Guinea Fund, topic 1965, Guinea file 195, pp. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Bogdan-Iulian Ranteş, *op.cit.*, pp. 275.

<sup>4</sup> Mihail Ionescu, *Romania and South African Liberation Movement: The Cold War Relationship, 1969-1977*, pp. 81 - 86.

<sup>5</sup> Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter AMFA), Direction V Relations, File 220, 1970-1971, pp. 20: Romanian Ambassador in Moscow suggested that the Soviet official who presented these issues, V.G. Solodovnikov, Director of the Africa Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, to be urgently invited in Romania.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, no number file, *Telegram from Warsaw*, 20 March 1973, informs that the Polish Communist leadership adopted a new course targeting Africa countries “up to now they were neglected”, Foreign

Ministry to be informed by the Romanian counterpart concerning its experience, and reiterated proposals for joint action.

<sup>7</sup> Central Historical National Archives (CHNA), Fond CC al PCR, File 138/1972, Minutes of a meeting between Comrade Ion Dincă, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party with an ANC delegation from South Africa, 17 November 1972, pp. 8.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 10 - 12.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, File 140/1972, Minutes of the discussions between Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu and the delegation of the ANC Party from South Africa, 21 November 1972, pp. 4 - 5.

<sup>10</sup> AMFA, Direction V Relations, File 627, p. 17, Telegram from Lusaka of Romanian diplomat I. Ardeleanu, 26<sup>th</sup> of March 1973. It gives details on a meeting between the Romanian diplomat and Tom Nkobi, Head of the ANC representation in Lusaka.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 18, *Telegram from Moscow to Bucharest*, 31<sup>st</sup> of October 1973.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* Problema 220/1975, South Africa, pp. 7.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 11; see also CHNA, Fond CC al PCR, Foreign Relations Section, File 51/1973, *passim*.

<sup>14</sup> Discussion of the author with the former TVR anchor in that time, Nicolae Melinescu, author of two works about Romania’s relations to Africa, *Vecina mea Africa* [My Neighbour Africa] and *Înapoi în Africa*, [Back to Africa] published in 2018 at Cetatea de Scaun Publishing House in Târgoviște.

<sup>15</sup> It was also the last, see the memoirs of General (ret.) Aurel Niculescu, Sorin Turturică, *Pe aviatori lasă-i să zboare!*, Editura Anima, București, 2008, pp. 90-109, and Ioan Cherecheș, *Vulturul își strânge aripile*, Editura Semne, București, 2009, pp. 122-140.

<sup>16</sup> Janel Tanase Sirius, *The First Mission of the Romanian Army after WWII*, Cer Senin, The Air Forces Review. 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> Cenotaph (from Greek κενός / kenos = naked, τάφος / tafos = tomb) is a funerary monument erected in memory of a deceased person, whose remains are found elsewhere or have disappeared. Usually, it is a symbolic grave, made in the memory of a person who died elsewhere (in war, shipwreck, etc.), <https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cenotaf>.

<sup>19</sup> Mihail E. Ionescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>20</sup> Romanian Military Archives – Pitesti, Fond Cadres and Education Direction, File 374/1981, File 98.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* File 374/1981, pp. 87, 98; File 380/1981, pp. 12, 23, 183, 260; File 338/1982, pp. 5, 186, 256, 260; File 337/1983, pp.114, 150 – 152; File 333/1983, pp. 3, 5, 10 – 11, 27 – 33; File 334/1984, pp. 50, 173, 186, 202; File 333/1984, pp. 5, 137, 262 - 263.

# UNDER THE SIGN OF THE RELAXATION POLICY? THE NATIONAL POPULAR ARMY OF THE GDR IN THE 1970s

RÜDIGER WENZKE, PhD

The 1970s started with a bang for the GDR. The dismissal of the long-standing head of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), Walter Ulbricht, on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1971 and the seizure of power controlled by Moscow by his former “crown prince”, Erich Honecker, had to open a new phase in the development of the East German state. However, the change of power, significant at first sight only in terms of domestic politics, has also shown early enough important external, economic, security and military political implications.<sup>1</sup>

First of all, the Soviet Union was thus interested in binding the GDR even more firmly than before, and in the future, no longer allowing political initiatives of the SED leadership in the style of Walter Ulbricht. The General Secretary of the CPSU, Leonid I. Brezhnev, was very blunt with Ulbricht’s successor, letting him know as early as 1970, in a confidential discussion, that the GDR is not the problem of East Germans only, but that of USSR, as well. For this he stated literally: “*We still have troops on your territory. Erich, I tell you honestly, never forget: the GDR cannot exist without us, without the Soviet Union, without its power and strength. Without us there is no GDR.*”<sup>2</sup>

The fact that Erich Honecker understood this lesson was then revealed at the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the SED Party held on June 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 1971 in East Berlin, which became the stage of his power presentation. First, the new party leader explicitly confirmed the leading role of the Soviet Union and the political and ideological model represented by the Soviet leadership. Secondly, the population was promised “a golden era”: an increase of wages and pensions, a boost in the production of consumer

goods and the solving of housing crisis. Thirdly, it was about the success of foreign policy, especially the international recognition of the GDR and its importance for the stability of the situation in Europe. The clarification of the question concerning Berlin by the victorious powers of World War II in the Four Great Powers Agreement, as well as the entry into the force of the Treaty of Moscow and the Treaty of Warsaw, were important benchmarks. A turning decisive point was the signing of the Basic Treaty on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1972, which has to regulate, in the future, the development of good neighbourly relations between the GDR and the FRG on the basis of equality of rights and in fact meant the international recognition of the GDR. From the European point of view, the Basic Treaty was of particular importance, as it concerned issues of non-violence and the confirmation of borders existing in Europe. As is well known, it included the guarantees that opened the way for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the discussions on mutual troop reductions in Central Europe.<sup>3</sup>

The new strategic orientation of the GDR after the 8<sup>th</sup> Party Congress had to be implemented not only in politics, economy and culture, but also in the armed forces, in accordance with the will of Soviet and East German leaders. Because the military reinforcement of each individual socialist country was considered an essential task, especially in the background of international expansion trends. “*We must not offer the imperialism the chance to change the balance of forces in its favour, we do not want to risk the peace and security of our people. This is precisely why the expansion is*

*not possible without ensuring the defence power of the community of socialist states.*"<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that the SED has given high priority to the planned future "improvement" of the national defence within the Alliance.

The National People's Army (NVA) was, with about 170,000 people, the most important armed organ of the GDR and the core of "socialist national defence"<sup>5</sup> Their function was primarily aimed at defending the country from the outside. Regarding the domestic use of force, the NVA was no longer officially planned since the early 1960s.<sup>6</sup> Since its official establishment in 1956, the NVA mission has been marked by its allied status and Soviet military doctrines. Limited military-doctrinal opinions and strategic ideas existed in the armed forces of the GDR only to a limited extent. Also, the NVA could not have acted independently in the event of war. Its ground forces, with six active divisions and five mobilization divisions, would also be placed under Soviet command, such as the East German People's Navy, as the "3rd Fleet" of the United Baltic Fleet and the air and air defence forces from the air defence system of the Pact.

In the 1970s, for the People's Army of the GDR a stage began, which was characterized mainly by the consolidation of the fighting power, the planned professional training, as well as by an increased ideologization. At the same time, it was already suggested that the Army should be used more as an economic factor. However, at the centre of all efforts was, as before, the improvement of the permanent combat training, according to which at least 85 percent of the personnel had to be present in barracks.

In a few years, almost 14 billion GDR marks were spent on new weapons, equipment and infrastructure, which also contributed to improving the services and living conditions of the National People's Army and the border troops. For the NVA leadership and their Soviet advisers, it was important that the armed forces of the GDR did not lose touch with modern developments in armament technology and troop management.<sup>7</sup>

This was all the more necessary as the NVA operative-tactical and tactical formations had to act within the coalition and, primarily, in

close cooperation with the Soviet army, in particular: with the GDR stationed troops of the Soviet Armed Forces Group in Germany (GSSD). Therefore, they had to have the equipment, structure, armament and combat training, largely coordinated with the "brothers of arms". This included a concentration of the defining elements for combat power, such as rocket and artillery systems, as well as tanks. Thus, the number of artillery weapons ("tubes") in the NVA has doubled in just one decade. With the 152 mm howitzer cannon from the "Akazia" self-propelled system, the artillery received for the first time, in 1978/79, a weapon capable of nuclear strikes. Within the Air Force / Air Defence (LSK/LV), efforts have been made to increase the combat capabilities of the first squadron of the air defence system in the northern area of the GDR, by introducing long-range anti-aircraft missile complexes and modernizing MiG aircraft.<sup>8</sup> In 1971, within the NVA Armed Forces category, the first fighter-bomber aviation squadron was formed.

Although the organization of the GDR's People's Navy, with its three fleets as relatively self-sufficient formations and mission-oriented differentiation of its operational resources in impact forces, security forces, landing and securing forces has remained essentially unchanged since the 1960s, the navy has benefited, for example, by the infusion of rocket and landing ships of more modern equipment and armament.<sup>9</sup>

Between 1970 and 1980 four major manoeuvres of the Allied Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact were served by the operational cooperation, with the participation of the NVA staffs and troops. Two of these oversized training and propaganda measures took place on the territory of the GDR. Overall, the political-military, technical-military and military cooperation was intensified within the Alliance. This was officially also the case for the NVA's relations with the Romanian Armed Forces. In the 1970s, NVA military delegates, under the leadership of the Minister of Defence, visited the sister country on the Black Sea twice. At a "friendship meeting" at the Bucharest Military Academy, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1972, the East German Defence Minister, Army General Heinz

Hoffmann, officially left no doubts regarding the connections with the Romanian Armed Forces: *“I want to assure you, dear Romanian brothers of arms, on behalf of the members of the National People’s Army, that you have good friends and loyal allies in the German Democratic Republic and their soldiers, who can be guided in thought and action by the principles of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism, who use their full power for the sustained reinforcement and safe defence of socialism.”*<sup>10</sup> The relationship remained, however, despite these colourful expressions of the manifestation of the fraternity of arms, rather cold and, from far away, did not reach the level of cooperation with the other armies of the Pact.<sup>11</sup>

Generally, it can be noted that the international relaxation policy had no limiting effect on the structure, weapons, equipment and technology, although the GDR actively participated in the Vienna negotiations on the mutual reduction of the armed forces and weapons in Central Europe, started at the end of October 1973. In fact, the exact opposite happened. The 1970s were more for the comprehensive modernization of the fighting technique and for a clear consolidation of the NVA’s combat power. Officially, it was created its own armament with the “undiminished aggressive global strategy”<sup>12</sup> of the West and its activities apparently against socialism. Arguments provided for this the substantial increase of the West German procurement budget between 1969 and 1973, as well as the introduction of new weapon systems, such as the Leopard tank and the “Phantom” fighter-bomber aircraft in the Bundeswehr.<sup>13</sup>

To the extent that the NVA, looking to the West, was continuously developed and professionalized as a conventional army, there was also an increase of the East-German border regime in the sensitive region between the two social organizations and military pacts. The border troops of the GDR, as a relatively independent component of the NVA, received in 1970 a new structure, which remained practically unchanged until 1989. However, it was particularly noted that the border strengthening was parallel to the internal Germans negotiations on improving the bilateral relations

between the GDR and the Federal Republic of Germany. Thus, contrary to all protests for relaxation, immediately after the signing of the basic Treaty between the two German states in December 1972, the security measures at the eastern border were again tightened. This was valid not only for a stronger involvement of the border population, but also aimed at the equipment with self-destruct systems, in the form of the SM 70 mine.<sup>14</sup>

The SM-70 mines were attached to the wire mesh border fence, reacted to the tension wires and triggered an explosion in a cone of metal fragments. By the end of the 1970s, over 400 kilometres of the western border of the GDR were equipped with the SM-70.<sup>15</sup> However, the GDR leadership tried to cover the existence of these killer machines. The secret dismantling of three SM-70s by Michael Gartenschläger, a former political prisoner in the GDR, who had been living in the Federal Republic of Germany for some time, caused the SED leadership to panic. The latter feared that the West could put these mines at the UN disposal, to prove the illegal nature of this weapon. Gartenschläger was shot and killed at the border, in May 1976, by employees of the Ministry of State Security (MfS). Earlier, Erich Honecker again personally demanded “uncompromising use of the firearm” in actions against the so-called border violators.<sup>16</sup>

Because the GDR leadership wished to further avoid the tendencies of relaxation and disarmament by a label change, the renaming of the former “NVA border troops” in the “GDR border troops” of October 1973 clarified this aspect. During the ongoing negotiations in Vienna on the reduction of conventional armed forces, the border troops in East Berlin no longer wanted to be considered part of the conventional armed forces – after all it was over 30,000 people. The now apparently independent border troops were, of course, still subordinated to the Minister of National Defence.

The 1970s in the GDR were not only for the permanent increase of the fighting power and the preparation for combat of the armed forces and the border troops, but also for the expansion of other segments of the national defence and the domestic repressive apparatus. The visible signs for promoting a “militarized

socialism” in the GDR were the interconnection of the paramilitary and military institutions with the educational institutions, the disciplining and social control of the population in these structures, the organization of the different social sectors in accordance with the military command and obedience principle, the ideological political-military indoctrination, as well as the preservation of military virtues and rituals.<sup>17</sup> Erich Honecker himself, on a troop visit in 1978, invented the phrase that there is no area of social life that would not have been penetrated by the interests of national defence.<sup>18</sup> And in the 1976 SED program, national defence was defined as an “essential feature of the developed socialist society”.<sup>19</sup>

Two years later, a new defence law made “socialist national defence” an integral part of the social order of the GDR. At about the same time, the construction of the territorial defence, started at the beginning of the decade, could be completed. This was mainly due to the requirements of the missions given by the Soviet Union for the operational preparation of the territory, such as the creation of military transport headquarters, the establishment of central storage and repair bases and the introduction of special mobilization units in different civilian ministries.

The paramilitary organizations, as well as the security and protection forces, have gained an increasing importance in the territorial area of national defence. They had to ensure their own territory against “agents, saboteurs and armed gangs” and to help for maintaining the protection of the civilian population and the viability of the country in case of emergency. Directly, in the SED’s service, were the “working class fighting groups” as an armed militia. In addition to the territorial protection of now stronger public enterprises and institutions, their missions included the tactical and logistical support for the NVA and Allied forces. Also, the civil defence, derived from air protection, played an important role in the national defence system and was even stylized within the Warsaw Alliance, starting in the mid-1970s, as an increasing factor of the strategic importance. As a result, the civil defence in the GDR, in 1976, was subordinated to the Minister of Defence. Four years later, civil defence

formations were included, for the first time, in an important military manoeuvre of the Warsaw Pact. The responsibility of civil defence for disaster protection was therefore temporarily passed behind the military-oriented mission.<sup>20</sup>

Because the fundamental distrust of the SED leadership towards the population remained intact, despite the promised social and cultural policy initiatives and the readiness to participate in the relaxation policy, the monitoring and oppression of the population have turned into perfection. The MfS continued to act as the main monitoring and repression tool of the SED inside the country, the party’s “shield and sword”. The switch from open repression to more subtle forms of intimidation was accompanied by an increase in the number of employees, who had to provide preventive measures for domestic security. The number of employees has increased from 43,000 to almost 60,000 men and women, from 1970 to 1975.<sup>21</sup> Last but not least, the militarization of the education system, in particular, has reached a new dimension. Above all, children and adolescents, as well as citizens with military obligations, have been subjected, increasingly, to various forms of systematic “socialist military education” by the party, the state and the mass organizations.<sup>22</sup>

Normalization and human rights policy were seen as a new “danger” to socialism, before which it was believed that you should not only defend yourself with military force, border fortifications and militarization. “It is obvious that imperialism has become a major ideological attack on socialism and that, in this way, it hopes to achieve decisive breaches in the strong and united front of the socialist states community”<sup>23</sup>, said a recent publication of the NVA’s main political administration. For the army leadership, especially for its party and political apparatus in the armed forces, the mission was to pursue the policy of relaxation, which was seen as a means of the West to ideologically destabilize of the socialist states, through an increasingly powerful delimitation by the Federal Republic of Germany, through an unconditional connection to the USSR, and, in particular, by a much more intense fight against all forms of “hostile ideologies”.

Every citizen of the GDR and therefore every soldier in the NVA knew that the so-called Eastern Treaty of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Agreement of the four great powers in Berlin codified the status quo in Europe. Numerous subsequent agreements, such as the Transit Agreement and the resumption of direct telephone traffic between both sides of Berlin in 1971, the 1972 Transport Agreement and the 1976 Postal Convention, have officially led to significant improvements in relations between the two German states. GDR has been a member of the United Nations since 1973. Two years later, Honecker signed the Final Act of the CSCE Conference in Helsinki.

As for the West-German “revenge and expansionism” against the East, as the GDR propaganda frequently referred to in the in the past, it couldn’t have been a word about it now. This is where the dilemma for the SED started. On the one hand, it had made progress in seeking international recognition of the GDR, on the other hand it feared an internal weakening of its party leadership, by too much interaction and freedom of movement. The successes of foreign policy and the participation of the GDR in international agreements have led, in a way, to the destabilization of domestic politics. Above all, the final CSCE Act of August 1975, co-signed by the GDR, caused concern for the SED leadership. Although the agreements on the rejection of violence, the territorial integrity and the inviolability of the borders, which were established here, have largely met the concerns of the foreign policy of the GDR, however, the humanitarian problems in the so-called “Basket III” of the adopted agreements contained a significant “explosive”. Constant for many years, the political, ideological and military images of foreigners and enemies began to crumble. The human rights could no longer be grossly ignored by party and state leadership. Now, the citizens could even claim “human facilities” for them when requesting trips to the West. In fact, the number of citizens in the GDR, which, above all, were demanding their right to free movement, in the context of human rights enforcement, was increasing rapidly.

The relaxation policy and the signals that flow from it, as well as the internal demarca-

tion of the GDR by the Federal Republic of Germany, which was imposed by the SED, led to numerous discussions and questions in the NVA also. “*The intensified ideological diversion of the opponent against the GDR and the NVA, which is associated with the conclusion of treaties between the USSR, the Polish Popular Republic, the GDR and the FRG, makes its presence known, to a greater extent, in the opinion of soldiers, non-commissioned officers, civil servants and officers*”<sup>24</sup>, the responsible policy officers and party officials in almost all categories of armed forces and border troops have almost established in unison. In particular, the concept of delimitation of the SED<sup>25</sup> under the slogan “*Everything connects us with our Socialist German Democratic Republic [...]. Nothing, but nothing connects us with the imperialism of the FRG*” was met with scepticism among soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Gaps in the political-ideological defensive front against the supposed influences of “social-democracy” and “human rights debates”, as well as forms of underestimation of the “nature of imperialism” were found in the army, especially in assessing the availability of the potential aggressiveness of the “West German imperialism”. Thus, the “demagogy of peace of the Brandt/Scheel government” led to an increase in the proportion of those in the army who believed that there was no danger of the Federal Republic of Germany launching a war. The growing international recognition of the GDR was no longer seen as evidence of the growing power of the GDR or the socialist world system, but as an expression of the willingness to negotiate and peacefully the Western states. The policy pursued by the SED for peaceful coexistence, as a form of class struggle, has equally found its critics, as well as those theses, which attributed, first and foremost, an aggressive character to the Federal Republic of Germany or which recognized a global superiority of socialism.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, against the background of political detachment, the requests to reduce the high level of readiness in the armed forces have become stronger. A staff sergeant was quoted as saying: “*We should stop talking about a threat of war. The combat training loses importance, and the requests for even more combat training discredit us.*”<sup>27</sup> In this regard, some

young officers expressed their opinion that they would no longer have any prospects in the Army now, that “the balance of terror” maintains the peace and the treaties concluded have made unlikely an armed conflict in Europe.<sup>28</sup> Also, the economic power and military superiority of the Warsaw Treaty states have been questioned once again. In this regard, many army employees believed that education for hatred towards “imperialism and its mercenaries” is so anachronistic that it no longer makes sense in socialist military motivation.<sup>29</sup>

A significant problem was seen by the military commanders and the party responsible officials in the increasing of the so-called reception of enemy transmission stations inside and outside the working program. For most of the “normal” citizens of the GDR, the reception of Western radio and television broadcasts, which promised a wide variety of information, offered the opportunity to form and maintain a political opinion independent of SED propaganda. In the armed forces, the “influence of enemy transmissions” was considered as a main channel for spreading enemy arguments among the military. Therefore, the “Western reception” remained, as before, illegal for the army personnel. However, there was not only an apparent increasing acceptance of the reception of Western broadcasters to subordinates by the superiors, but also a higher proportion of non-commissioned officers and officers, who were informed by the “Western sources”. In the Neubrandenburg military sector of the NVA ground forces, in 1971/72, for example, a total of 2,333 “listeners” were identified, of which 1,597 soldiers, 709 non-commissioned officers and 27 officers.<sup>30</sup> About 5,000 cases were registered in the border troops in the same period.<sup>31</sup>

Although at the beginning of the 1970s every officer and two out of three non-commissioned officers practically belonged to the SED, and the NVA’s leadership body was thus regarded as part of the party, the officers also showed influences of the supposed “ideological diversion” of the West. In isolated situations, the officers took positions, in which they tried to demand more democracy and more freedom. Some referred directly to Helsinki.<sup>32</sup>

Also, the restricted contacts of the military in all categories of ranks with Western people have reached a new dimension in the context of the policy of relaxation. As in any army, in the NVA there were regulations for the protection of the military secrets. In addition to the general principles, legitimate for the protection of their security interests, these rules, however, also contained provisions that many army employees did not consider appropriate, especially in the 1970s. NVA employees and civilian personnel were generally forbidden from accepting and maintaining official and unofficial contacts with citizens and institutions from “non-socialist foreign countries”. Especially the professional non-commissioned officers, cadets and officers were also required to influence the people living in their household, such as spouses, concubines and children, so that they also complied with strict NVA regulations. However, some professional soldiers considered family ties, family peace and a sense of unity among relatives more important than any ideological delimitation of the party. Hidden “western contacts” – often over a long period of time – were the consequences. Of course, these secret relations rarely escaped state oversight of the GDR security authorities.

Generally, the political-ideological pressure on the members of the army increased in the 1970s. In practice, this meant, first of all, that any critical political opinion that deviated from the official SED line was immediately stigmatized, but also identified and persecuted as an influence of the “class enemy”. Of course, the SED and the army leadership not only acted through increased ideological indoctrination, but also with rigorous punitive measures against critics and dissidents in the army. Thus, the number of politically motivated party procedures has increased considerably. Depending on the crime, the party proceedings against the SED members in uniform also have, as a rule, pointed consequences for the job and disciplinary actions. There are examples that even the reception of westerners in the Honecker era could lead to punishments and, in individual cases, dismissal from the NVA. Thus, a NVA major was excluded from the SED and dismissed from the NVA, without

prior notification, with the demotion to the rank of soldier. His offense: the officer listened and watched Western shows for a long time. Therefore, the SED officials considered that the “class opinion” of the officer would have been “affected” and the major could no longer perform the functions of party member and commander.<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the NVA was systematically and continuously strengthened in the 1970s by a strong coalition army. This was in the interest of both the leadership of the Soviet Union and the leadership of the SED, who was thinking about its power. The international relaxation policy has accelerated this military process more than hindering it. Even though the SED had and wished to take into account the policy of relaxation of the great powers, especially with regard to foreign policy, it did not tolerate any call for international agreements in domestic politics. Expression in this sense was the consolidation of the border regime and the increased ideological indoctrination of the population and the military. The coexistence of the “peace and relaxation policy”, on the one hand, the arms race, the militarization, the external delimitation and the internal repression, on the other hand, have characterized the GDR ever since.

## NOTES

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<sup>3</sup> Oliver Bange, *Der KSZE-Prozess und die sicherheitspolitische Dynamik des Ost-West-Konflikts 1970-1990*. In: *Wege zur Wiedervereinigung. Die beiden deutschen Staaten in ihren Bündnissen 1970 bis 1990*. Published on behalf of the Center for Military History and Social Sciences of the Bundeswehr by

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<sup>5</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, *Nationale Volksarmee. Die Geschichte*, München 2013; Rüdiger Wenzke, *Ulbrichts Soldaten. Die Nationale Volksarmee 1956 bis 1971*. Published by the Military History Research Center, Berlin 2013 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, 22).

<sup>6</sup> Günther Glaser, *Armee gegen das Volk? Zeitgenössische Studie mit Dokumenten zur Einsatzplanung des Militärs im Innern der DDR (1949-1965/66)*, Frankfurt on Main 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Wilfried Kopenhagen, Hans Mehl, Knut Schäfer, *Die NVA. Land-, Luft- und Seestreitkräfte*, Stuttgart 2006; Wenzke, *Nationale Volksarmee* (Ibid. 5), pp. 112-124.

<sup>8</sup> Julian-André Finke, *Hüter des Luftraumes? Die Luftstreitkräfte der DDR im Diensthabenden System des Warschauer Paktes*, Berlin 2010 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, 18).

<sup>9</sup> Friedrich Elchlepp and others, *Volksmarine der DDR. Deutsche Seestreitkräfte im Kalten Krieg, Hamburg, Berlin, Bonn 1999*; Fritz Minow, *Die NVA und die Volksmarine in den Streitkräften. Geheimnisse der Warschauer Vertragsorganisation*, Friedland 2011, pp. 328-353.

<sup>10</sup> Heinz Hoffmann, *Den Einfluss des Sozialismus verstärken. In: Hoffmann, Sozialistische Landesverteidigung* (Ibid. 4), pp. 320-322, here: pp. 322.

<sup>11</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, “Sozialistische Waffenbrüder?” *Über die Beziehungen der Nationalen Volksarmee der DDR zu anderen Warschauer-Pakt-Armeen*. In: *Der Warschauer Pakt. Von der Gründung bis zum Zusammenbruch 1955 bis 1991*. Published on behalf of the Military History Research Center by Torsten Diedrich, Winfried Heinemann and Christian F. Ostermann, Berlin 2009 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, 16), pp. 85-118. See also in detail the lui Klaus Storkmann’s contribution “*Verbündete auf Distanz*” in this volume.

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<sup>13</sup> Hoffmann, *Der Imperialismus* (Ibid. 4), pp. 494-495.

<sup>14</sup> Hendrik Thoß, *Gesichert in den Untergang. Die Geschichte der DDR-Westgrenze*, Berlin 2004, pp. 158-269; Jochen Maurer, *Halt – Staatsgrenze! Alltag, Dienst und Innenansichten der Grenztruppen*

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<sup>15</sup> Peter Joachim Lapp, *Grenzregime der DDR*, Aachen 2013, pp. 468-474.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted after Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat* (Ibid. 1), pp. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Heiner Bröckermann, *Militarisierung der DDR*, Erfurt 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Erich Honecker, *Der Schutz des sozialistischen Vaterlandes liegt in guten Händen*. In: Erich Honecker, *Dem Frieden unsere Tat. Ausgewählte Reden und Aufsätze zur Militär- und Sicherheitspolitik der SED (1976-1981)*, Berlin (Ost) 1982, pp. 105-109, here: pp. 109.

<sup>19</sup> The Program of the Party of the Socialist Unity in Germany. In: Protocol of discussions of the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party of the Socialist Unity in Germany, 2<sup>nd</sup> volume, Berlin (East) 1976, pp. 209-266, here: pp. 220.

<sup>20</sup> Clemens Heitmann, *Schützen und Helfen? Luftschutz und Zivilverteidigung in der DDR 1955 bis 1989/90*, Berlin 2006 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, 12).

<sup>21</sup> Jens Giesecke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit. Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950-1989/90*, Berlin 2000, pp. 294.

<sup>22</sup> Bröckermann, *Militarisierung* (Ibid. 18).

<sup>23</sup> *Wissen und Kämpfen. Für die politische Schulung des Soldaten*, 14<sup>th</sup> Notebook, 1970/71, pp. 53.

<sup>24</sup> Information report of the Political Administration of the Leipzig Military Sector on the ideological diversion of the enemy from December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1972, Federal Archive, DVP 1/7576, pp. 19.

<sup>25</sup> "The fundamental line of our party supposes that the whole course of the development and consolidation of our socialist state leads, objectively, and must lead to the fact that the contrast between us and the FRG, which goes on the capitalist path, intensifies and therefore the process of delimitation

between the two states, in all areas of social life, are becoming more and more profound." Erich Honecker, *Die Deutsche Demokratische Republik – fester Bestandteil der sozialistischen Staatengemeinschaft*. In: Erich Honecker, *Zuverlässiger Schutz des Sozialismus. Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften zur Militärpolitik der SED*, Berlin (East) 1977, pp. 166-189, here: pp. 176.

<sup>26</sup> Rüdiger Wenzke, *Zwischen "Prager Frühling" 1968 und Herbst 1989. Protestverhalten, Verweigerungsmuster und politische Verfolgung in der NVA der siebziger und achtziger Jahre*. In: *Staatsfeinde in Uniform? Widerständiges Verhalten und politische Verfolgung in der NVA*. Published on behalf of the Military History Research Center by Rüdiger Wenzke, Berlin 2005 (= Militärgeschichte der DDR, 9), pp. 199-428, here: pp. 243-247.

<sup>27</sup> Report of the Political Commission of the LSK/LV Political Administration on the enemy influences from March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Federal Archive, AZN Strausberg P- 1262, pp. 69.

<sup>28</sup> College Protocol from July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1973, Annex 1: Report of the working group of the Central Committee of the SED on the efficiency of ideological work in NVA, Federal Archive, DVW 1/55575, pp. 19.

<sup>29</sup> Bröckermann, *Landesverteidigung und Militarisierung* (Ibid. 1), pp. 398-400.

<sup>30</sup> Information report of the Political Administration of the Neubrandenburg Military Sector on the ideological diversion of the enemy from December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1972, Federal Archive, DVP 1/7576, pp. 35.

<sup>31</sup> Information report of the Political Administration of the Border Troops on the ideological diversion of the enemy from December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1972, Federal Archive, DVP 1/7576, pp. 80.

<sup>32</sup> Wenzke, *Zwischen "Prager Frühling"* (Ibid. 27), pp. 251-257.

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