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Austria

Memo¹ by the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 GERMAN UNITY; STATE OF AFFAIRS IN MID-JULY 1990

Vienna, 18 July 1990

I. Inner-German Aspects

The Economic, Monetary and Social union of the two German states entered into effect on 1 July 1990. The most essential measure was the introduction of the Deutschmark in the GDR. An agreement on the legal and constitutional unification of the two parts of Germany is in preparation and should be signed by the autumn of this year.

All-German Elections

The next Bundestag election was scheduled for 2 December 1990. In its place, all-Germany elections should now take place on that day. The mode of election is still at issue. The GDR-CDU advocates for carrying out voting separately in the FRG and the GDR (electoral threshold 5%) and the accession of the GDR to the Bonn Basic Law only afterwards. The SPD and FDP in both parts of the country are for a unitary election in all of Germany (electoral threshold for the whole territory 5%) and the accession of the GDR before the election. (This proposal i. a. would mean that the PDS, the successor party to the SED in the GDR, may fail to reach the 5% threshold in unified Germany.) The West German CDU is divided on the issue.

II. External Aspects

Upon the occasion of the recent visit of Chancellor Kohl² to Moscow, President Gorbachev³ gave a de facto green light to German unity. The agreement achieved includes the following main points:

¹ *Memo (translated from German):* Austrian State Archive ÖStA, AdR, BMAA, II-Pol 1990, GZ. 22.17.01/173-II.1/90. Written by Marius Calligaris, dodis.ch/P57521 and signed by Johann Plattner, dodis.ch/P57520; also published in Wilson Center, doc. 165725. Distributed to the Federal Minister, the General Secretary, the section heads, all departments of the Political Section, and the Austrian diplomatic representations in member states of the CSCE. The information was also part of the preparation file for Franz Vranitzky on the occasion of the visit by Lothar de Maizière to Austria scheduled for 25 and 26 July 1990. See ÖStA Arbeitsbesuch von MP Lothar de Maizière 25./26. Juli 1990, Kreisky Archives, Depositum Franz Vranitzky, AP, box BM Choonhavan Chatichai (Thailand), MP Calfa CSFR 1990 PM Silva (Portugal), MP Singh (Indien), Pres. Dubcek (CSFR), PM Kang Young-Hoon (Korea), PM Bhutto (Pakistan), Pres. George Vassiliou (Zypern), MP Maiziere Lothar (DDR) 25.7.90).

² Helmut Kohl (1930–2017), dodis.ch/P31852, Chancellor of the FRG 1.10.1982–27.10.1998.

³ Mikhail Gorbachev (*1931), dodis.ch/P31707, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union 11.3.1985–24.8.1991, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union 25.5.1989–15.3.1990 and President of the Soviet Union 15.3.1990–25.12.1991.

- Unified Germany consists of the FRG, GDR and Berlin
- Full sovereignty of Germany, after unification
- Soviet consent to NATO membership of unified Germany
- Soviet troop withdrawal from the territory of the GDR in 3–4 years (a treaty will be concluded on this)
 - During which time no extension of NATO structures on GDR territory, however, validity of the NATO alliance obligation for it (commitment from Kohl that, also later, there will be no non-German troops east of the Elbe)
 - Western Allies military presence in Berlin until completion of the Soviet troop withdrawal
 - Reduction of total German forces to 370,000 (Compromise Genscher⁴-Stoltenberg⁵)
 - Renunciation of ABC weapons by unified Germany

Gorbachev expressly pointed out that his change of attitude on the issue of German NATO membership was made possible by the Moscow-positive result of the recent summit of the Alliance in London.

Chancellor Kohl has furthermore assured massive economic aid to the Soviet Union and promised also to advocate for such assistance from other Western states.

By summer of 1991 a German-Soviet agreement is to be completed, which according to Chancellor Kohl will contain co-operation in various fields and regular political consultations.

Reactions to the German-Soviet agreement are unanimously positive worldwide (the case of Ridley⁶ in Great Britain shows however the existence of subliminal reservations in individual Western European countries towards the weight of the future unified Germany).

Given the agreement reached in Moscow, the “2+4” talks in Paris on 17 July went without controversy. The foreign ministers decided to work out a declaration on Germany, in which the external aspects of German unity should be regulated. The declaration will be discussed at the next “2+4” round on 12 September in Moscow.

Polish Western Border

At the recent “2+4” talks, where the Polish Foreign Minister⁷ also participated, the question of the Polish western border was at center (the Bonn Bundestag and the GDR People’s Chamber on 21 June adopted a statement on the inviolability of the Oder-Neisse line and a border treaty to be concluded between Germany and Poland). At this point Poland dropped its final demand, whereby the full sovereignty of Germany should only be restored after ratification of this border treaty. Agreement has now been reached that the treaty will be signed in the shortest

⁴ Hans-Dietrich Genscher (1927–2016), dodis.ch/P15414, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the FRG 1.10.1982–17.5.1992.

⁵ Gerhard Stoltenberg (1928–2001), dodis.ch/P46108, Defence Minister of the FRG 21.4.1989–1.4.1992.

⁶ Nicholas Ridley (1929–1993), dodis.ch/P48293, British Secretary of State for Trade and Industry 24.7.1989–13.7.1990.

⁷ Krzysztof Skubiszewski (1926–2010), dodis.ch/P57377, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs 12.9.1989–26.10.1993.

- 215 possible time after the realization of German unity and submitted to the parliament of unified Germany for ratification. (The FRG has promised Poland economic aid too.)

III. Assessment

It can now be expected that the unification of the two German states will become reality before the end of the year.

Through the agreements in Moscow and Paris, respectively, the following has been achieved:

The FRG: the realization of German unity

The West: NATO membership of unified Germany

The USSR: satisfying its security interests (German troop strength, German renunciation of ABC weapons, first steps to change NATO as a condition for the reached agreement, beyond this the bargaining chip of a troop presence east of the Elbe for 3–4 years) and economic assistance by the FRG or the West.

From a pan-European perspective, the agreement paves the way for a rapid continuation of military negotiations in Vienna and for the objective of setting up a new political architecture in Europe.

For Austria, a point of interest will be i. a. how much impact the efforts of the Western European states to firmly “bind Germany to the West” will have on the development of the EC (deepening, European Union!).