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Poland

*Memo¹ by the Polish Military Mission in West Berlin*MEMORANDUM CONCERNING SOME PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CURRENT
PHASE OF THE PROCESS OF GERMANY'S REUNIFICATION

West Berlin, 28 May 1990

1. An analysis of the current phase of German-German relations shows that the reunification process is being influenced by:

- election results in Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia;
 - after a monetary and economic union is introduced: expected social and economic problems in the GDR and a scarcity of democratic (and, to a degree, party) structures in the GDR, which supports the argument for the current German government to push through a programme of absorbing the GDR pursuant to Art. 23 of the FRG constitution;
 - Mr Kohl² perceiving greater chances of success in early federal elections rather than later ones;
- and external factors such as:
- no objection from the three western powers against rushing the reunification;
 - pessimistic outlook for developments in the Soviet Union (to complete before the possible fall of Gorbachev³). The Soviet Union's position has been noticeably weakening; Shevardnadze's⁴ position on future roads to Germany's unity is considered to be little thought-out and giving Kohl the green light. Taking Germany out of NATO is absolutely ruled out, which is why next steps from the Soviet Union are being anticipated. All actions by the USSR are being widely commented on (pulling out troops from the GDR and halting talks on conventional arms reduction).

2. After the initial period of close relations among the four powers, a slightly more cautious approach to reunification issues could be discerned among the western allies (mostly France and the UK). The allies are starting to grow uneasy about the Kohl government's policy of *faits accomplis* which partially takes the form of forcing support on the western allies. Nevertheless, the

¹ *Memo (translated from Polish): Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs AMSZ, Dep. IV 31/92, w. 3.*

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.*

⁴ *Eduard Shevardnadze (1928–2014), dodis.ch/P54603, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union 2.7.1985–26.12.1990.*

201 three western allies are not afraid of Germany's rising importance because of the interconnections within the EEC and NATO, which they consider durable. Opinions are being increasingly often heard about the West's lack of confidence in the success of M. Gorbachev's policy of domestic reforms. That is why it is deemed sound to keep up the rapid pace of Germany's reunification process, while highlighting the fact that we are transitioning from a bipolar system to a new one which will feature Germany in a prominent position.

In the view of the three powers, the situation in Eastern and Central Europe (the breakup of a political alliance and the economic collapse) has set the actors free from the post-war community of interests with the USSR on the German issue. These superpowers are more interested in the breakup of the next eastern alliance, i.e. the Warsaw Pact, and in Germany's entering NATO structures than in irritating its German ally. That is also connected with fears of a possible tilt in strategic balance to the east, were Germany to have a neutral state status.

Interestingly, in contrast to their governments' official positions, representatives of the three superpowers in *W[est] B[erlin]* do not hide their concerns and doubts about the implications of Germany's reunification when speaking off the record.

3. Given the view of the three western allies as well as the main political and social forces in the FRG, GDR and *W[est] B[erlin]*, the Polish diplomatic offensive has led to securing our interests with respect to the border on the Oder and Neisse rivers. Currently, though, the infrastructure of treaty relations and economic cooperation are gaining particular importance. Examples could include actions of the USSR, which was quick to open talks with Bonn in order to protect its economic interests under its existing cooperation agreements with the GDR. Our country might face a number of problems not only stemming from the monetary and economic union between the FRG and GDR, but also the associated creeping disintegration of the GDR economy. Additional difficulties will be involved in the introduction of the EEC internal market in 1992, also covering the GDR.

That is why in the "2 + 4" talks and in bilateral talks with the FRG and GDR, the Polish side could deem this element an important component of Europe's wider security and cooperation system and the foundation of a future European home. On the whole, it is a main direction supported by all the interested parties, including Germany. It could also be a factor in mitigating German economic expansion.

It is not clear yet what Germany's approach to Poland will be like in the future, especially in light of the anticipated polarization of public opinion and attitude towards the Poles. In many respects, Poland features negatively in the German issue (and its negative image has been recently perpetuated — vide the results of Polish "tourism" to the FRG, GDR, and *W[est] B[erlin]*).

The fast-paced reunification process entails specific threats to Poland, e.g. the high number of Polish visits by GDR citizens in order to register their former properties (land, homes) with the intention of seeking damages for them. The voices in the FRG that advocated a compensation adjustment between Germany and Poland have not completely gone silent, either.

202 Therefore, it could be concluded that the only right direction is to build pan-European structures based on the CSCE — with a US and Canadian presence in Europe. It would be appropriate to take advantage of Bonn's declared aspirations to a European community before new structures of a reunified Germany ultimately consolidate.