

## **The CMFA in short – Annotated History of the Meetings of the Warsaw Pact Committee of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs**

### **27-28 April 1959**

The foreign ministers examine questions related to the Geneva disarmament negotiations, Germany, the signing of a peace treaty with Germany, and the elimination of the occupation regime in West Berlin. The agenda reveals the ad hoc nature of the meeting and the need for the PCC to delegate foreign policy issues to foreign ministers.

### **6-17 June 1966**

At the heart of the meeting is the discussion of a draft declaration on European security. The foreign ministers discuss ways to improve the activities and procedures of the Warsaw Pact, but Romanian opposition prevents agreement on a joint conclusion. Further topics are US policy in Vietnam, the significance of the Potsdam agreement for the territorial order in Europe, and the "militaristic and revanchistic" stance of West Germany along with its efforts to get nuclear weapons.

### **8-10 February 1967**

In their meeting of February 1967, the foreign ministers are focusing on European security, with special regard to West Germany. They take issue with Romania's recent recognition of the Federal Republic of Germany, the East German representative taking the lead in condemning it. The ministers stress the importance of the inviolability of state borders in Europe, the international recognition of East Germany, and the denial of nuclear weapons to West Germany. In their call for a European security conference, the ministers refer to the 1966 Bucharest Declaration of the PCC.

### **30-31 October 1969**

As its predecessors, the October 1969 meeting of foreign ministers is dedicated to the pan-European conference proposed by the Warsaw Pact states. The two central questions of the planned conference are security and the non-use of force or threat of force among European states, and the extension of economic, trade and scientific-technical relations in Europe. In view of a positive response to the proposals in Western Europe, ministers are optimistic about convening the conference.

### **21-22 June 1970**

The central issue of the meeting is the planned conference on security and cooperation in Europe. The foreign ministers attach special value to the many recent bilateral and multilateral preparatory meetings since the call for the conference in March 1969. The ministers express their satisfaction at the increasingly positive response to the proposal in the West and at growing acceptance of East Germany's participation in the conference together with West Germany. They discuss a series of organizational questions related to the conference.

### **18-19 February 1971**

Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko voices his satisfaction at the positive worldwide response of the Warsaw Pact's initiative for a pan-European security conference. He informs his colleagues on contacts with various European states and praises the Finnish proposal for preparatory talks. The foreign ministers urge international diplomatic recognition of East Germany.

### **25-26 May 1977**

The first CMFA meeting is dedicated to the discussion of the international situation and the preparation of a common Warsaw Pact stand for the CSCE conference in Belgrade. With the exception of the Romanian foreign minister, the ministers want the Belgrade conference to be of consultative character only. The ministers deem the CSCE conference an opportunity to introduce proposals to supplement political détente with military détente. Further discussed are the Western human rights policy toward Eastern and Central Europe, disarmament, the idea of a pan-European conference on transportation, energy and environment, and economic questions. Romanian dissent is omnipresent.

### **24-25 April 1978**

In their second meeting, the foreign ministers assess the Belgrade CSCE conference and discuss disarmament measures in view of the upcoming special UN session on disarmament as well as political and military détente. The foreign ministers reject Western promotion of human rights as interference in domestic affairs of the Warsaw Pact states. The Romanian foreign minister opposes most Soviet initiatives and introduces independent proposals for freezing of military expenditures, troops and armaments. The foreign ministers stress the CMFA's importance for the coordination of national policies.

### **14-15 May 1979**

The foreign ministers consider a substantive CSCE conference in Madrid necessary to overcome the failure of the Belgrade conference. To foster military détente, they urge an agreement prohibiting the first use of nuclear arms and favor an extension of the existing confidence-building measures. Romanian proposals to create an all-European institution for security and cooperation meet with opposition.

### **5-6 December 1979**

The main topics of the fourth CMFA meeting are the CSCE conference in Madrid, the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact, and NATO's imminent decision to deploy intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe. In their communiqué, the Warsaw Pact foreign ministers call on the NATO states to reconsider the situation in Europe and to desist from the deployment. The foreign ministers discuss political and cultural initiatives to celebrate the Warsaw Pact jubilee. They consider ways toward further developing the CMFA. The Romanian foreign minister's proposal for a unilateral reduction of troops and armaments is opposed by his colleagues.

### **19-20 October 1980**

At their fifth meeting, the foreign ministers emphasize the importance of convening a conference on military détente and disarmament. They confirm the principles expressed in the Warsaw Declaration of the PCC and the joint procedure the CSCE conference in Madrid as adopted by the deputy foreign ministers. Further topics are Western assessments of the Soviet threat and the intervention in Afghanistan as well as the diverse Western attitudes on East-West confrontation. The Polish foreign minister tries to reassure his colleagues that his government is in control of the Solidarity crisis.

### **1-2 December 1981**

At their sixth meeting, the foreign ministers show concern about steady deterioration of the international climate and heightened risk of war. They blame the United States for the breakdown of disarmament talks. They voice a growing awareness of the different interests and policies in the Western hemisphere. Regarding the final document of the CSCE conference in Madrid, the ministers deplore its failure to define adequately confidence-building measures. Proposals by the Romanian foreign minister for the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, the prohibition of military exercises in vicinity of state borders, and other measures elicit no support from the other six foreign ministers.

### **21-22 October 1982**

Apart from addressing general questions of international security in Europe and the world, the foreign ministers at their seventh meeting focus on the upcoming resumption of the CSCE negotiations in Madrid. They agree on resisting the confrontational course of the United States and other Western states. Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko in his speech elaborates on the international situation and the state of the tactical and strategic nuclear arms control talks as well as the Vienna talks on the reduction of conventional forces and armaments. Romanian opposition includes the rejection of the Soviet position in the Geneva talks and refusal to deprecate the Camp David accords. Soviet party leader Leonid Brezhnev at a reception for the foreign ministers expresses his satisfaction at the work of the committee.

### **6-7 April 1983**

The central issue of the eighth CMFA meeting is that of the Euromissiles about to be deployed in West Germany, Great Britain, and Italy. The discussion focuses on a NATO-Warsaw Pact agreement on non-aggression and peaceful resolution of conflicts, as proposed at the PCC meeting of January 1983. Further discussed are the emerging final Madrid document, the MBFR talks in Vienna, and ban on chemical weapons. Soviet foreign minister Gromyko informs his colleagues on the state of the Geneva disarmament talks. The foreign ministers agree to set up three working groups, one of them to deal with the cooperation mechanisms in the Warsaw Pact.

### **13-14 October 1983**

As in the preceding meeting, the foreign ministers in the ninth CMFA meeting focus on the impending deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe and further institutionalization of the Warsaw Pact. The foreign ministers call on NATO governments to desist from the missile deployment, express concern about deteriorating international situation, and regret the lack of a Western response to their initiatives. The Soviet foreign minister accuses the United States of violating "strategic stability", and places hopes in the growing anti-war movement in Western Europe. The foreign ministers assign topics to be dealt with at special meetings of their deputies and create expert groups for specific matters. Further discussed are the outcome of the Madrid CSCE conference and US sanctions against Poland. Romanian dissidence results in a protracted discussion about the text of the communiqué.

### **19-20 April 1984**

In the first CMFA meeting after the Euromissile deployments, the Czechoslovak foreign minister in his speech justifies the "counter-deployments" of Soviet missiles in Czechoslovakia and East Germany. The ministers agree to issue a call on NATO states for multilateral consultations on the conclusion of a non-aggression agreement. The Soviet representative briefs his colleagues on global developments and Soviet-Chinese relations. A Polish proposal for the extension of the validity of the Warsaw Treaty is rejected by Romania side and therefore shelved. Romania raises objection to almost every item of the agenda.

### **3-4 December 1984**

The eleventh CMFA meeting discusses the international situation, especially the crisis spots in Central America and the Caribbean, Soviet-Chinese relations, the militarization of outer space in view of Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, and Western embargo and other economic sanctions against Warsaw Pact countries. The foreign ministers agree in principle to extend the validity of the Warsaw Treaty by another 20 years.

### **19-20 March 1986**

The twelfth CMFA meeting takes place after the coming to power of Mikhail S. Gorbachev. It is highly affected by the new wind in terms of content and organization. Not only do issues such as the Afghanistan war, economic problems, and ecology become agenda items, but also informal CMFA meetings in restricted session are introduced to allow candid discussions of delicate matters. Informal consultations supplement the hitherto cumbersome formal consultations, and a simplification of the minutes is agreed upon. "Formalism and irregularities" in the functioning of the CMFA are made object of consideration. Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze voices his satisfaction at the first informal gathering of foreign ministers that immediately follows the official CMFA meeting.

### **14-15 October 1986**

At the thirteenth CMFA meeting, the dominant topic is the immediately preceding summit between Soviet leader Gorbachev and US President Reagan in Reykjavik. Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze informs his fellow ministers in detail about the course and the results of the summit. He then defines the character of the Warsaw Treaty as a military defense organization with continually increasing political functions. The foreign ministers respond positively to the new Soviet approach and agree on expanding the alliance agencies to flexibly and effectively coordinate national foreign policies.

### **24-25 March 1987**

At the fourteenth CMFA meeting, the ministers assess the implementation of the Reykjavik agreements and the coordination of the different national foreign policies. They emphasize the importance of benefiting from the current propitious international situation by reaching an agreement on the removal of all intermediate-range missiles in Europe. Toward this goal and for other reasons, the ministers favor multifaceted political dialogue with the West. They discuss the course of the CSCE negotiations in Vienna, and appeal to NATO for a moratorium on military expenditures.

### **29-30 March 1988**

At the sixteenth CMFA meeting, the ministers welcome Soviet efforts to make the West accept substantial reductions of armaments. Soviet foreign minister Shevardnadze informs his colleagues on the state of disarmament negotiations with the United States. The foreign ministers underscore the need to analyze and learn from the integration processes in Western Europe. They favor negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and continuation of regional disarmament initiatives. Further discussed is the development of cooperation mechanisms within the Warsaw Pact.

**28-29 October 1988**

In their joint assessment of the international situation, the ministers at the seventeenth CMFA meeting consider the trend toward overcoming confrontation as a defining feature of the international situation and express their intention to prevent a stagnation of détente. They favor an early conclusion of the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna. The ministers emphasize the need for a common Warsaw Pact position on the reduction of conventional troops and armaments. They agree to enhance foreign policy coordination within the alliance.

**11-12 April 1989**

Similar to the preceding gathering, the foreign ministers at the eighteenth CMFA meeting perceive a turn towards international détente, and seek to prevent a standstill in disarmament questions. Apart from conventional disarmament, ministers agree to hence focus on the realm of tactical nuclear weapons and naval forces. Furthermore, the participants stress the need to improve coordination within the alliance. More importantly, the ministers differ in their assessments of the situation in Europe and the results of the CSCE meeting in Vienna. While the GDR, Romania and Czechoslovakia stress the existence of détente hostile forces in NATO, Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union depict the results of the CSCE meeting in Vienna as groundbreaking. The Hungarian and Polish foreign ministers voice their readiness to accept Western human rights claims.

**26-27 October 1989**

The nineteenth CMFA meeting concerns mainly economic questions; for the first time, ministers of foreign trade attend the meeting. All representatives emphasize the importance of strengthening pan-European economic and humanitarian cooperation. According to the Soviet foreign minister, the alliance under the new conditions amounts to a balance of national and security interests of the member states. As in the April 1989 meeting, the foreign ministers disagree in their assessment of the international situation and in human rights matters, Poland and Hungary broadly taking Western views. While affirming its alliance obligations, Poland maintains that these exclusively concern foreign security, not the internal order of member states.