

10. Governmental Declaration of Chancellor Willy Brandt
28 OCTOBER 1969
Excerpts

“This Government, (...) works on the assumption that the questions which have arisen for the German people out of the Second World War and from the national treachery committed by the Hitler regime can find their ultimate answers only in a European peace arrangement. However, no one can dissuade us from our conviction that the Germans have a right to self-determination just as has any other nation. The object of our practical political work in the years immediately ahead is to preserve the unity of the nation by ending the present deadlock in the relationship between the two parts of Germany.

(...)

The Germans are one not only by reason of their language and their history, with all its splendour and its misery; we are all at home in Germany. And we still have common tasks and a common responsibility: to ensure peace among us and in Europe.

(...)

Twenty years after the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the G.D.R., we must prevent any further alienation of the two parts of the German nation—that is, arrive at a regular modus vivendi and from there proceed to co-operation. This is not just a German interest: it is of importance also for peace in Europe and for East-West relations

(...)

The Federal Government will continue the policy initiated in December 1966, and again offers the Council of Ministers of the G.D.R. negotiations at Government level without discrimination on either side, which should lead to contractually agreed co-operation. International recognition of the G.D.R. by the Federal Republic is out of the question. Even if there exist two States in Germany, they are not foreign countries to each other; their relations with each other can only be of a special nature.

(...)

Following up the policy of its predecessor, the Federal Government declares that its readiness for binding agreements on the reciprocal renunciation of the use or threat of force applies equally with regard to the G.D.R.

(...)

The Federal Government will advise the United States, Britain and France to continue energetically the talks begun with the Soviet Union on easing and improving the situation in Berlin. The status of the City of Berlin under the special responsibility of the Four Powers must remain untouched. This must not be a hindrance to seeking facilities for traffic within and to Berlin. We shall continue to ensure the viability of Berlin. West Berlin must be placed in a position to assist in improving the political, economic and cultural relations between the two parts of Germany.
(...)

“The Federal Government will promote the development of closer political co-operation in Europe with the aim of evolving step by step a common attitude in international questions. Our country needs co-operation and co-ordination with the West and understanding with the East. The German people need peace in the full sense of that word also with the peoples of the Soviet Union and of the European East. We are prepared to make an honest attempt at understanding, in order to help overcome the aftermath of the disaster brought on Europe by a criminal clique
(...)

In continuation of its predecessor's policy, the Federal Government aims at equally binding agreements on the mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force. Let me repeat: this readiness also applies as far as the G.D.R. is concerned. And I wish to make it unmistakably clear that we are prepared to arrive with Czechoslovakia—our immediate neighbour—at arrangements which bridge the gulf of the past
(...)

Today the Federal Government deliberately abstains from committing itself to statements or formulae going beyond the framework of this statement, which might complicate the negotiations it desires. It is well aware that there will be no progress unless the Governments in the capitals of the Warsaw Pact countries adopt a co-operative attitude.”
