

15. Declaration on the Events in Poland¹ 1 January 1981

The Allied governments condemn the imposition of martial law in Poland and denounce the massive violation of human rights and the suppression of fundamental civil liberties in contravention of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the Final Act of Helsinki.

The process of renewal and reform which began in Poland in August 1980 was watched with sympathy and hope by all who believe in freedom and self-determination; it resulted from a genuine effort by the overwhelming majority of the Polish people to achieve a more open society in accordance with the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki.

The imposition of martial law, the use of force against Polish workers, with the thousands of internments, the harsh prison sentences and the deaths that followed, have deprived the Polish people of their rights and freedoms, in particular in the field of trade unions. These acts threaten to destroy the basis for reconciliation and compromise which are necessary to progress and stability in Poland. They are in clear violation of Polish commitments under the Helsinki Final Act, particularly the principle relating to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Developments in Poland demonstrate once again the rigidity of the Warsaw Pact regimes with respect to those changes necessary to meet the legitimate aspirations of their peoples (1). This endangers public confidence in co-operation between East and West and seriously affects international relations.

The Allies deplore the sustained campaign mounted by the Soviet Union against efforts by the Polish people for national renewal and reform, and its active support for the subsequent systematic suppression of those efforts in Poland. These acts cannot be reconciled with the Soviet Union's international undertakings, and in particular with the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki, especially those dealing with sovereignty, non-intervention, threat of force, and self-determination. The Soviet Union has no right to determine the political and social development of Poland.

The Allies call upon the Polish leadership to live up to its declared intention to re-establish civil liberties and the process of reform. They urge the Polish authorities to end the state of martial law, to release those arrested, and to restore immediately a dialogue with the Church and Solidarity. Only with reconciliation and genuine negotiation can the basic rights of the Polish people and workers be protected, and the economic and social progress of the country be secured. Poland could then expect to enjoy fully the benefits

of stability in Europe and of constructive political and economic relations with the West.

The Allies call upon the Soviet Union to respect Poland's fundamental right to solve its own problems free from foreign interference and to respect the clear desire of the overwhelming majority of the Polish people for national renewal and reform. Soviet pressure, direct or indirect, aimed at frustrating that desire, must cease. The Allies also warn that if an outside armed intervention were to take place it would have the most profound consequences for international relations.

In their communiqué of 11th December, 1981, NATO Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to work for a climate of confidence and mutual restraint in East-West relations; what has since happened in Poland has great significance for the development of security and co-operation in Europe. The persistence of repression in Poland is eroding the political foundation for progress on the full agenda of issues which divide East and West.

The Allies remain committed to the policies of effective deterrence and the pursuit of arms control and in particular have welcomed the initiatives contained in President Reagan's 18th November speech. The Soviet Union will bear full responsibility if its actions with regard to Poland and its failure to live up to existing international obligations damage the arms control process. A return to the process of real reforms and dialogue in Poland would help create the atmosphere of mutual confidence and restraint required for progress in negotiations in the field of arms control and limitations, including the Geneva talks on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces due to resume on 12th January.

In view of the grave developments in Poland, which constitute a serious violation of the Helsinki Final Act, the Allies agreed that the Madrid Conference should deal with the situation as soon as possible at the level of Foreign Ministers.

The Allies will also intensify their efforts to bring to the attention of world public opinion and international organizations, including the United Nations and its specialized agencies such as the International Labour Organization, the violation of human rights and acts of violence in Poland.

Each Ally will, in accordance with its own situation and legislation, identify appropriate national possibilities for action in the following fields:

- further restrictions on the movements of Soviet and Polish diplomats, and other restrictions on Soviet and Polish diplomatic missions and organizations;

- reduction of scientific and technical activities on non-renewal of exchange agreements.

Meanwhile the Allies emphasise:

- their determination to do what lies in their power to ensure that the truth about events in Poland continues to reach the Polish people despite the obstacles created by the authorities in Warsaw and Moscow in direct contravention of their obligations under the Helsinki Final Act;
- their resolve that the quality of their relations with the military regime in Poland should reflect the abnormal nature of the present situation and their refusal to accept it as permanent;
- their willingness to contribute, with other governments, to the solution of the problem of Polish citizens now abroad and unable or unwilling to return to their own country (1).

The Allies recognize the importance of economic measures to persuade the Polish authorities and the Soviet Union of the seriousness of Western concern over developments in Poland, and stress the significance of the measures already announced by President Reagan (1).

Regarding economic relations with Poland, the Allies:

- noted that future commercial credits for goods other than foods will be placed in abeyance;
- noted that the question of holding negotiations about the payments due in 1982 on Poland's official debts should for the time being, be held in suspense;
- affirmed their willingness to continue and increase humanitarian aid to the Polish people for distribution and monitoring by non-governmental organizations to ensure that it reaches the people for whom it is intended;
- noted that those Allies which sell food to Poland will seek the clearest possible Polish commitments with regard to the use of the food (1).

In the current situation in Poland, economic relations with Poland and the Soviet Union are bound to be affected. Soviet actions towards Poland make it necessary for the Allies to examine the course of future economic and commercial relations with the Soviet Union. Recognising that each of the Allies will act in accordance with its own situation and laws, they will examine measures which could involve arrangements regarding imports from the Soviet Union, maritime agreements, air services agreements, the size of Soviet commercial representation and the conditions surrounding export credits (1).

The Allies will maintain close consultations on the implementation of their resolve not to undermine the effect of each other's measures.

In addition to agreeing to consult on steps to be taken in the near future, the Allies will also reflect on longer-term East-West economic relations, particularly energy, agricultural commodities and other goods, and the export of technology, in light of the changed situation and of the need to protect their competitive position in the field of military and technological capabilities (1).

Footnote:

(1) The Greek delegation has reserved its position on these paragraphs.
