[An extract] from a circular telegram from the USSR People's Commissariat on Foreign Affairs on the outcome of the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers of the USSR, the USA and the UK, dated 5 November 1943.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Moscow conference of the Three Ministers concluded on 30 October. On the insistence of Hull and Eden, Molotov chaired all 12 meetings of the Conference.[[2]](#footnote-2) The conference demonstrated that there was a point of convergence on a number of important questions regarding the war and the post-war settlement. The Soviet delegation’s comments and proposals were seriously taken into consideration. Taking into account the task set forth, an extensive agenda, and that it was the first meeting of the three ministers, the work of the Conference should be regarded as satisfactory.

The outcome of the Conference was an agreement on a communiqué, which the four adopted during the declaration of the Conference and which have been published. You should become very familiar with them.

The Soviet delegation’s proposal at the first item of the agenda stated that in order to shorten the war it is necessary on the part of anglogov [the British government] and the amerigov [the US government] to still take urgent action in 1943 that will ensure the Anglo-American armies’ invasion in the North France and which would, along with Soviet troops’ powerful blows on the main German military forces on the Soviet-German front, radically undermine the military-strategic situation in Germany and lead to a decisive shortening of the war. The British-American response to this question was on the whole and in general satisfactory.

[...]

The declaration on the democratic tasks in Italy was adopted through our initiative. What is more, we did not agree to add our voice for the approval of the Allied Military Government for Occupied Territories (AMGOT) work, or to other allied agencies in Italy, referring to the fact that in the absence of our representative on site, we are unable to speak in favour on this issue.

[...]

On the subject of agreements between the major and minor allies, the Soviet delegation declared that the Soviet government cannot agree with the British government’s proposal to conclude an agreement without having [first] carried out negotiations with the governments of other European countries on any commitments or agreements that deal with post-war issues. However, the Soviet government did express its readiness to conclude an agreement with the British government regarding the obligation of both sides not to conclude an agreement with other European governments that were their allies in the fight against Nazi Germany. This relates to not making any agreement or pact that has to do with post-war issues without prior consultation and agreement. However, along with this, the Soviet government considers it a right for both states, with aim of preserving peace and resisting aggression, to conclude an agreements on post-war issues with neighbouring allied nations without having to put it at the mercy of consultation and coordination from others. This is because such agreements relate to the immediate issue of security of their borders and the respective bordering two states, such as the USSR and Czechoslovakia. In discussing this issue, Eden said that the British government has no objection to the conclusion of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty, thus ridding itself of old objections.

The Conference did not adopt a decision on this matter. However, on 29th October Eden sent a letter addressed to me, in which he points out that after the exchange of views that took place at the conference, he considers it unnecessary to continue discussing the British delegation’s proposals.

In an exchange of views on the Polish question, the Soviet delegation said that the Soviet Union stands for an independent Poland, and is ready to help it, but it is necessary for Poland to have a government that would be friendly towards the USSR. The Soviet delegation stated that the issue of the Polish-Soviet relations should, above all, refer to and must be settled by Poland and the Soviet Union as neighbours. No decisions were taken on the question of Poland.

[...]

On the question of the future management treatment of Germany, the US delegation submitted the following written proposals: Germany must surrender unconditionally. Moreover, in order to ensure compliance with the surrender, the occupation of Germany should be carried out by contingents of British, American and Soviet forces. The National Socialist Party should be immediately dissolved. Germany is obliged to provide compensation to USSR and other allied and occupied countries for the physical damage caused by its armed forces. All German armed forces must be disarmed and demobilized. Germany must be deprived of a standing army, and military training should be banned. According to the American government, it is desirable to decentralize the German political structure, with aim of encouraging this process within Germany. On the whole, Eden agreed with Americans’ suggestion. The Soviet delegation stated that our attitude to American project is positive, and that the program outlined therein correctly covers the main questions. The Soviet delegation also stated that the Soviet Government is against making public statements about the weakening of Germany, as it would help to unite the Germans in their struggle against us.

As a result of the discussion on the treatment of Germany and other enemy countries in Europe, it was decided that this issue would be passed to the European Advisory Commission for further elaboration.

[...]

As a result of discussions on the issue of trial peace balloon[[3]](#footnote-3), the Soviet government, the British government and American government must immediately inform each other about the trial offer of peace that they might receive. The three governments also agreed to coordinate their actions with regard to such proposals.

Opinions were exchanged in regards to federations. The Soviet delegation declared that the Soviet Government considers among the most important tasks the post-war settlement of Europe, the establishment of lasting peace, and the restoration of independence and sovereignty in the release of small countries. The Soviet Government believes that small countries would require an unspecified timeframe, one that would not apply in the same way to all of them, in order that they could fully get to grips with the new conditions that resulted from the war, the newly established relations with neighbouring and other countries, and not to be succumbing to any external pressure to join one or another new group of states. This is an important step, as a federation with other states and the possible abandonment of part of their sovereignty can only allowed on the basis of a people’s will that is free, peaceful and well-thought-out. Therefore, the Soviet Government considers it premature for now to schedule and thus artificially encouraged associations of any state in the form of federation. Eden recognized the importance of our arguments and agreed that to make decisions on this question is untimely[[4]](#footnote-4), while Hull declared that his government has still not acted to promote federations.

[...]

The issue of joint policy on the resistance movement in Yugoslavia is based on Eden’s suggestion. Eden and Molotov had a conversation on this issue, during which we promised to send a military mission to the Yugoslavian partisans. Eden sought such a Soviet mission to be also sent to Mihailovic, which we did not agree to.

For more information about the Conference, we will send you a diplomatic pouch.

 V. Molotov

[Archive of the President of the Russian Federation (hereafter - AP RF), f. 3, inv. 63, file 233, pp. 67-75]

Keywords: Poland, Post-war order, Yugoslavia

1. Sent out to Soviet diplomatic representatives in London, Washington, Algeria, Stockholm, Ankara, Tokyo and Chongqing. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As reported to the Foreign Office by Kerr on 6 November, "the chairmanship was imposed upon a modest and protesting Molotov”, (From Moscow to Foreign Office, 06/11/1943 // TNA, Foreign Office (hereinafter - FO) 371/37031). As noted by the British historian, D. Watson, Molotov agreed to chair "placing the full responsibility for the success of the conference on his shoulders (Watson D., Molotov: a Biography. Basingstoke, 2005. P. 207). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Refers to the Allies’ offer of peace talks to Nazi Germany's satellites. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. According to D. Watson, "the real Soviet objection was to the formation of a bloc of states in eastern Europe hostile to the USSR ... When Eden did not persist with his proposals, Molotov had scored another notable victory” (Watson D., Molotov…. p. 209). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)