Supplement to the circular telegram of the People's Commissariat of the USSR on the outcome of the Berlin (Potsdam) Conference between Heads of Government of the USSR, the USA and the UK, dated 5 August 1945[[1]](#footnote-1)

In addition to the telegram ... with information on the Berlin Conference, I consider it necessary to make the following clarifications.

1. On Germany: The decisions taken at the Conference regarding the political and economic principles for Germany merit serious attention. They were discussed in detail. As can be seen from the communiqué, the political sections regarding the permission for democratic parties, trade unions and local German authorities to function in all of Germany were adopted, and are already being carried out in the Soviet zone. All three parties agreed on the fact that while it is impossible to create a central German government, in accordance with our proposal, it was decided to establish a central German departments of finance, transport, communications, foreign trade and industry, which will work under the supervision of the Allied Control Council. The economic principles stated in what respects Germany should be regarded as a single economic unit[[2]](#footnote-2). Much attention was paid to the issue of exports and imports (paragraph 19[[3]](#footnote-3)). The decision should be detrimental to the implementation of reparations, which we were especially concerned.

2. Reparations from Germany. This was adopted within the framework of the decisions, which was proposed by the Americans, and according to which there will be a uniform order to the recovery of reparations from Germany. Germany is divided into two main areas: a) ours - eastern and b) the allies - western zone. The Soviet Union received reparations from its German zone and from the German investments in Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary, Romania and eastern Austria, plus an additional amount of reparations from the Western zones (paragraph 4[[4]](#footnote-4)).

Under these conditions, we, in our zone, and the Allies in their zones, will be sufficiently independent in our approach to reparations. In addition, we have to settle with Poland mutual calculations of reparations.

3. The German Navy and merchant fleet. The decision taken was in line with our proposal. We agreed to the British proposal to sink most of the German submarine fleet, in which Britain expressed a particular interest. We agreed to allocate part of the acquired German merchant fleet to Poland, while the allies - to the rest of the allied countries that are interested in this matter.

4. The decision with regard to Konigsberg and the surrounding area is of great importance to the Soviet Union. We will have our own ice-free port on the Baltic Sea, and this piece of German territory will be directly attached to the USSR.

5. Two important decisions were taken on the Polish question. Arciszewski’s[[5]](#footnote-5) government in exile has been formally abolished, while political support is rendered to the National Unity government in fully implementing its charter domestically and abroad. Of key importance is the decision on Poland's western border with the inclusion of Stettin and German Silesia into Polish territory. This decision was adopted after prolonged opposition from the British and the Americans, who insisted on the border along the Oder and Neisse East (and not the Western Neisse), and is fully conforms with the demands of the Polish government and the Soviet Union.

6. The issue of a peace treaty and the approval of the United Nations was also discussed in detail. The Americans, who were the initiators, brought up the question of Italy only in the beginning. The British added a proposal on neutral countries. We attached this to the question of satellite [countries] and Spain. The decision taken was a compromise. This seems to us to be satisfactory, particularly because it unties our hands for the diplomatic recognition of Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland, as well as condemning the Franco regime in Spain. Our proposal for the Allies to break off diplomatic relations with Franco was not accepted. But even in a compromised form this solution is of great international importance.

7. The decision of the Council of Foreign Ministers was adopted at the initiative of the Americans, who place particular importance on it. Through our amendments, the Council of Ministers shall meet as a part of quintet, as well as a trio or quartet of members, depending on the nature of the issues under consideration. In addition, the meeting reaffirmed the necessity of the decisions taken in Crimea by the three Ministers[[6]](#footnote-6). Such a decision, which limits the number of our partners to the necessary minimum, is, from our point of view, the most flexible and satisfactory.

8. The general atmosphere at the Conference. In contrast with the initial stage of the Conference, the last stage of the Conference was for the better. Initially, we had brought a number claims to the British and Americans about our independent steps to remove captured equipment from Germany and satellite countries as part of reparations, about our policy in the Balkans, where there seems to be no democratic development of political life, and about the necessary control that needs to be taken by all the allies over the governments, etc. At the beginning of the conference the British and the Americans did not want to compromise on the Polish question, and especially on the western border of Poland, and also did agree to meet us halfway on the question of reparations from Germany. Most of the important decisions were made at the end of the Conference, during which a significant consensus was reached[[7]](#footnote-7). Replacing Churchill and Eden had no apparent effect on the outcome of the Conference, as most of the decisions were already taken by Attlee and Bevin[[8]](#footnote-8).

Confirm receipt.

MOLOTOV

[Archive of the President of the Russian Federation, f.3, inv.63, file 231, pp.160-164]

Keywords: Germany, Poland, United Nations, inter-allied relations

1. It was distributed in the same way as the telegram of 4 August produced above. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Earlier, when working on this issue in the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs in August 1944, the head of the III European Section of the Commissariat A.A. Smirnov noted that following the principle of ‘regarding Germany as a single economic whole independent of zones of occupation’ has presented an opportunity for supply from the Soviet zone; ‘it will strengthen our position on the issue of controlling German industry which is concentrated for the most part in the zone of Anglo-American occupation.’ (SSSR i germanskii vopros. Т. 1. S. 522). The British authorities also expressed interest in following this principle, being anxious the USSR would block the supply of foodstuffs from the agricultural lands in the east to the west of Germany. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This point ran as follows: ‘After the payment of reparations, enough resources should be left to the German people in order that they can subsist without external help. When Germany’s economic balance is worked out the means necessary for imports should be set aside, as approved by the Control Council in Germany. Proceeds from the export of current production and stocks of commodities will go in the first instance to pay for such imports’ (Berlinskaia konferentsiia. S. 434). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. It spoke of the opportunity for the USSR to receive 15% of the industrial capital equipment ‘that would not be required for the peace time economy of Germany’ from the western zone in exchange for supplies of raw materials and also 10% of the industrial capital equipment in settlement of reparations (Berlinskaia konferentsiia. S. 435). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Arciszewski, Tomasz Stefan (1877 – 1955) – Polish statesman and politician (PPS – WRN), Prime Minister of the Polish government in London (1944 – 1947). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Then, having emphasised the utility of meetings of foreign ministers during the conference, the heads of government of the three states agreed that ‘a permanent mechanism for regular consultation between the three foreign ministers should be created. Thus the foreign ministers would meet as often as required, probably every three or four months’ (Krymskaia konferentsiia. S. 252). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. In spite of Churchill’s gloomy assessment of the conference in his memoirs (‘frustration was the fate of this final Conference of “the Three”’), Attlee and Bevin’s account for the British Cabinet was restrained in a sufficiently positive key. See: Churchill W.S. The Second World War. Vol. VI. P. 578; Documents on British Policy Overseas (hereafter – DBPO) / Ed. by R. Pelly. Ser. 1. Vol. 1. London, 1984. P. 1143. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In spite of Churchill’s gloomy assessment of the conference in his memoirs (‘frustration was the fate of this final Conference of “the Three”’), Attlee and Bevin’s account for the British Cabinet was restrained in a sufficiently positive key. See: Churchill W.S. The Second World War. Vol. VI. P. 578; Documents on British Policy Overseas (hereafter – DBPO) / Ed. by R. Pelly. Ser. 1. Vol. 1. London, 1984. P. 1143. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)