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**Report from General Ion Ionita, Minister of the Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania, to Nicolae Ceausescu, on the meeting of the Consultative Political Committee of the Warsaw Pact held in Sofia, 3 June 1968.**

**By General Ion Ionita**

**TO COMRADE**

**NICOLAE CEAUSESCU**

**GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY**

**PRESIDENT OF THE STATE COUNCIL**

1. In accordance with what was established at the Conference of the Consultative Political Committee that took place at Sofia, Marshal of the Soviet Union I.I. Jakubovsky sent to the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, with the letter No. 104704 of 24 May 1968, the drafts of the following documents drawn up by the Unified Command:

- Statute of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization;
- Statute of the Military Council of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization;
- Statute of the common system of antiaircraft defense of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization; and
- Diagram of the organization of principle of the leading organs of the Supreme Command of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization and of the organizational diagram of the Technical Committee.

[Marshal J.] asks for the documents to be analyzed by the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces and [for the results of the analysis] to be brought to the notice of the Romanian Communist Party's leadership and of the government.

At the same time, [MJ] indicates that soon he will come in person to the Socialist Republic Romania, so that together with the [Romanian] Minister of Armed Forces he can bring to the notice of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and of the President of the Council of Ministers the above-mentioned materials, along with the observations and proposals concerning these materials made by the Ministries of Armed Forces of the Polish People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Bulgarian People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, and the Hungarian People's Republic.

2. I report that the discussions regarding the improvement of the Unified Command began in 1966, at the initiative of the Soviet side. At two conferences, in February, 1966 – at the level of the chiefs of general staffs, and in May, 1966 – at the level of the ministers of defense of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, a Draft Statute of the Unified Armed Forces Command was discussed and drawn up, on which the delegation of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces agreed, except for a number of objections

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that were included in the protocol of the conference of the ministers of armed forces, which took place in Moscow in May, 1966.

These objections referred to:

- The role and functions of the Consultative Political Committee;
- The need to create the Military Council of the Unified Command, with a consultative role;
- Representatives of the Supreme Commander of the Unified Armed Forces in the armies of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the presence of whom was not deemed advisable.

On the occasion of the conference of the Consultative Political Committee at Bucharest, in May 1966, the Romanian side drew up its own Draft Statute, which it handed over to the ministers of defense of the states taking part in the Warsaw Treaty Organization. As you know, the Draft Statute of the Unified Command was not discussed any further at this conference of the Consultative Political Committee.

In February 1968, another conference at chief-of-general-staff level took place in Prague; at this conference the issues of creating the Military Council of the Unified Command and of approving the statute thereof, as well as a Draft Statute of the Unified Command, were discussed. The delegation of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces did not agree with the provisions of the protocol concluded on that occasion, expressing its different view, in which it was specified that “it is of the opinion that the general issues and the issues of principle must first of all be solved and finalized, and only then is the statute of the Unified Command – where its attributions are established – to be submitted to the governments of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, for consideration and approval; afterwards, one may proceed to the creation of its various organs...”.

After the Prague conference, these issues were included in the agenda of the conference of the Consultative Political Committee at Sofia, in March 1968, which established that the ministers of defence of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization are to analyze and put forward – in six months’ time – proposals concerning the statute of the Unified Command, as well as the creation of the general staff, the Military Council, and the Technical Council.

3. It was apparent from the documents sent by the Unified Command, analyzed beforehand by the college of the Ministry of Armed Forces, that in these documents were included some of the proposals of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces made on the occasion of the previous conferences, such as those referring to the creation of the Military Council; the appointment, by the governments of the states taking part in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, of the chief of staff and of the Supreme Commander’s deputies in charge of anti-aircraft defense and equipment from the ranks of the armed forces of each state participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization; direct subordination of the troops of which the Unified Armed Forces are composed to the ministries of defense (practically, however, due to the rights of command and control granted to the Supreme Commander and to the general staff, this [direct subordination] is only fiction); proportional representation of the armies of countries participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization within the framework of the Unified Command, etc.

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There were also included, however, issues contradicting the point of view approved by the state and party leadership [of Romania], and supported by the delegations of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces at the previous conferences.

In connection with the aforementioned issues, we paid special attention to the fact that some provisions in the present statute of the Unified Command, which referred to the right of the Supreme Commander to command, control, and give orders to the troops comprising the Unified Armed Forces, were again adopted, in spite of the fact that they were abandoned and were not included any more in the Draft Statute of May, 1966. However, now the creation is proposed of a body whose commander has the right to command and control, not only rights of coordination and cooperation, study and recommendation, as the delegations of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces proposed at all the conferences that have taken place so far.

Below, I will bring to your notice the main issues included in the draft documents sent, and the proposals of the Ministry of Armed Forces.

a) In the Draft Statute of the Unified Armed Forces it is stipulated that the Consultative Political Committee has the task of settling the general issues commonly agreed upon, which are directed towards strengthening the defense capability of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization and improving the structure of the Unified Armed Forces; appointing the Supreme Commander; making decisions and giving instructions as regards the activity of the Supreme Commander, the latter having to inform the Consultative Political Committee about the results of his activity.

Concurrently, the Consultative Political Committee is given the right to make decisions as to the troops of the Unified Armed Forces passing to the stage of high and complete combat capability, analyze and approve the plans linked with the development of the Unified Armed Forces (it is true that such rights are given to the Consultative Political Committee or the governments of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization).

Giving such rights to the Consultative Political Committee is in contradiction with the provisions of the Warsaw Treaty, in Art. 6 of which it is stated that the Consultative Political Committee is created “with the purpose of carrying out – between the signatory states – the consultations provided in the present Treaty, ...”, and, therefore, it is a consultative organ.

The right is given to the Supreme Commander to command and control the armed forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization. According to the Draft Statute, the Supreme Commander can issue orders, directives, dispositions, and even deploy the troops of the Unified Armed Forces in the territories of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization and to relocate them in other points, depending upon the situation and corresponding to the needs of mutual defense. To confer a legal aspect to this right, it is stated that the deployments are to be conducted in keeping with the “decisions of the governments of these states”.

The right is also conferred to the Supreme Commander to control the development of the operational and combat preparations, and the level of combat capability of the troops and fleets composing the Unified Armed Forces, in compliance with both the general plan of the common activities and his own assessment. Such control attributions are also provided for the general staff of the Unified Command.

In this way, the provisions of the Draft Statute contradict the principles of collaboration and mutual assistance based on the respect for the sovereignty and national independence, and the non-intervention in the internal affairs [of other countries], thus negatively affecting the essential attributes of the governments of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization. All these rights place the Supreme Commander above the national governments and turn the Supreme Command into a supranational command and control organ, instead of a coordination and cooperation organ, the activity of which is based on the principles of organizing the relationships between socialist countries with equal rights.

Another fact deserving special attention is the proposed denomination of the Draft Statute: “ Statute of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization”.

The argument that “the Unified Armed Forces are created in accordance with Art. 5 of the Treaty of Friendship...” is not correct; under Art. 5 it is provided that “The contracting parties have agreed on the creation of a Unified Command of the armed forces...”, and not on the creation of the Unified Armed Forces. It is logical, therefore, to draw up a statute of this command, and not of the Unified Armed Forces. I emphasize the fact that the present Statute approved by the Consultative Political Committee in 1956 bears the title “Statute of the Unified Command of the armed forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization”.

Besides the title of the Draft Statute of the Unified Command, in its contents, as well as in the drafts of the other documents sent, the “unified armed forces” are often referred to, a thing we cannot agree with since the armed forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization do not unify, they remain in the subordination of the national commands, and the way they are used can only be decided by the party and state leadership of the state in question.

b) In the draft “Statute of the Military Council of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization“ it is stipulated that the Military Council is a military organ of the Unified Armed Forces, with functions of consultation and recommendation. The recommendations and the proposals are to be adopted, however, by the Military Council, on the basis of a simple majority of votes. The Military Council is composed of the Supreme Commander, his deputies in the armies of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the chief of general staff of the Unified Armed Forces, the deputy in charge of antiaircraft defense, the deputy in charge of equipment, and a secretary appointed by the Supreme Commander.

Concomitantly, it is mentioned that the chief of staff of the Unified Armed Forces “organizes the control of the fulfillment of the Supreme Commander’s decisions regarding the proposals and recommendations adopted by the Military Council”.

The adoption of the proposals and recommendations by the Military Council by a simple majority of votes is a principle applicable within the internal framework of the parties and states, and I think it cannot be extended to the relationships between parties and states. Its application to international relationships is not acceptable.

c) Together with the Draft Statute of the Unified Armed Forces and the Draft Statute of the Military Council of the Unified Armed Forces of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, I have also received a new “Statute of the common antiaircraft defense system of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization”.

It is apparent from the analysis of this draft statute that the common antiaircraft defense system joins together all the antiaircraft defense troops of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, and on the part of the USSR – the antiaircraft defense troops deployed in the territories of the Soviet Socialist republics of Latvia, Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, and Moldavia.

It is stipulated that the command of the common antiaircraft defense system be exerted by the commander of the antiaircraft defense troops of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the command organ being the chief of staff of the antiaircraft defense of the state from which the commander was appointed.

For carrying out the combat missions in common, the “unified troops” of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization have as a basis the following principles: utilization of all the forces and means for repelling the first hits; utilization, in combat, of a common operational plan; equipping with technical combat means of the same kind; centralized command of the common combat actions; common radar and communications system.

It is provided that the operational antiaircraft defense system of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization be drawn up by the Commander of the antiaircraft defense troops and approved by the Supreme Commander after it has been agreed upon with the ministers of defense. Simultaneously, the right of the Commander of the antiaircraft defense troops is given to control, in accordance with his own plan or as assignment from the Supreme Commander, the operational and combat readiness, and the combat capability of the general staffs and of the antiaircraft defense troops included in the common system. In addition, the Commander of the antiaircraft defense troops has the obligation of being multilaterally conversant with the state of the antiaircraft defense troops, and – by mutual agreement with the commanders of the antiaircraft defense troops of the participating states – to take steps with a view to ensuring their combat capability.

The adoption of such a statute of the antiaircraft defense troops would lead, practically, to their subordination to the Commander of the antiaircraft defense troops of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

The existence of the representatives of the Supreme Commander within the armies of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, an issue vividly debated at the previous conferences, and which – as a result of the proposal made by the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces – had no longer been included in the draft statute drawn up on the occasion of the conference of the ministers of defense in May, 1966, is now included again in the draft statutes received, the purpose being to make their existence permanent.

e) We have no objections to the organizational diagrams of principle of the Unified Command’s organs. The number of officers to be detailed by the Ministry of Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania does not represent the exact number, according to the proportional representation, in view of our country’s

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contribution to the Unified Command's budget, which is 10%. The Ministry of Armed Forces would have to detail nine officers to the staff, instead of the five officers provided in the diagram.

f) I mention that there is no reference to the Albanian People's Republic in any of the draft documents sent to us, unlike the documents analyzed at the Conference of the Ministries of Defence in May, 1966, where the Albanian People's Republic was mentioned.

4. In conclusion, the study of the documents sent by the Unified Command has especially brought out the obvious change of position of the Soviet partner, in the sense that it has again introduced in the documents provisions which give the Supreme Commander, the General Staff, and the Commander of the antiaircraft defense troops of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization the possibility of commanding and controlling the troops intended to act in common. The fact is also significant that, in the Draft Statute of the Unified Command drawn up at the conference of the ministries of defence in May, 1966, as a result of the proposals of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, such provisions had not been included any longer, all of the delegations – including the Soviet one – agreeing that the Unified Command be an organ of coordination and cooperation, not of command and control.

5. Taking into consideration the things I brought to your notice, I think that at the discussions to be held at the future conference of the ministries of defense with a view to drawing up the proposals for the Consultative Political Committee, the delegation of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces must set forth the following point of view:

- To further support the point of view and the draft statute of the Unified Command drawn up by the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, approved by the party and state leadership in 1966, Appendices 1 and 2. The draft Statute drawn up by the Unified Command and the one drawn up by the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, as well as the detailed observations and proposals of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, are given in the comparative table in Appendix 3;
- To agree with the draft statute of the Military Council, with the observation that the recommendations and the proposals of the Military Council be adopted on an unanimity basis, not on the basis of a simple majority of votes. The detailed observations and proposals are given in the comparative table in Appendix 4;
- To support the idea that the draft statute referring to the antiaircraft defense system of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization be drawn up in accordance with the same principle as in the case of the draft statute of the Unified Command drawn up by the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces, assigning to the command of the antiaircraft defense troops of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization the role of coordinator of the common activities. The detailed proposals are given in the comparative table in Appendix 5;
- To agree with the organizational diagrams of principle of the Unified Command and the Technical Committee, with the observation that the number of officers to be detailed by each army be reviewed in order to observe the participation percentages. The draft organizational diagrams of principle are given in the Appendices 6 and 7.

Taking into account the experience acquired so far, and the viewpoint expressed at the previous conferences by the delegations of the other countries, it is quite possible that the point of view of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces may not be accepted. In such a situation, the other delegations might express their agreement with the draft documents drawn up by the Unified Command, and put forward to the Consultative Political Committee a common point of view.

If the situation developed as I described above and the conclusion of a protocol were proposed, the delegation of the Ministry of Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania should express its different viewpoint about the issue of the documents drawn up by the Unified Command, stating that the Ministry of Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania will not work in compliance with the provisions of these documents since they infringe upon the principles of equality between states, alliance, independence, national sovereignty, and nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, and turn the Consultative Political Committee and the Unified Command into supranational bodies.

As a follow-up to this position, the Socialist Republic of Romania – without declaring that it leaves the Friendship, Collaboration, and Mutual Assistance Treaty – places itself outside of the integrated military organisms of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

There could be another solution, namely that – in the event of the other delegations not adopting our point of view, in fact the most probable situation – the delegation of the [Romanian] Ministry of Armed Forces finally agree with the draft documents drawn up by the Unified Command, except for the provisions referring to the existence of the representatives of the Supreme Commander within the framework of the armies of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the right of the Supreme Commander to deploy and redeploy the troops of the Unified Armed Forces in the territory of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty Organization, as well as the adoption of the recommendations and proposals in the Military Council on the basis of a simple majority of votes.

Expressing this point of view, the delegation of the Ministry of Armed Forces should actually declare that the Socialist Republic of Romania reserves the right to review the number of tactical and operational units and large units of all the categories of armed forces which are to be included in the structure of the Unified Armed Forces in the sense of reducing them.

MINISTER OF THE ARMED FORCES  
OF  
THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA,

Colonel General Ion Ionita

*[Source: Arhivele Militare Române (henceforth AMR) [Romanian Military Archives], fond V2, vol.3, dosar 12/35, ff.53-63.DR, vol.1, pp.399-409]*