They agreed that if such initial steps succeed they should be followed within a reasonable time by a comprehensive disarmament agreement which must necessarily presuppose a prior solution of the problem of German reunification. Accordingly, the Chancellor advised the President, as he has the French and British Governments, that the Federal Republic would consider that the conclusion of an initial disarmament agreement might be an appropriate time for a conference on the reunification of Germany among the Foreign Ministers of the four powers responsible therefor. The United States will consult with the French and British Governments regarding this matter.

The President stressed that any measures for disarmament applicable to Europe would be accepted by the United States only with the approval of the NATO allies, which he hoped would take a leading role in this regard, and taking into account the link between European security and German reunification. He assured the Chancellor that the United States does not intend to take any action in the field of disarmament which would prejudice the reunification of Germany. He stated that the United States would consult with the German Federal Government closely on all matters affecting Germany arising in the disarmament negotiations.

WASHINGTON, D.C., *28 May 1957*.

Berlin Declaration by the Foreign Minister of the German Federal Republic and the American, British, and French Ambassadors, on Germany, European Security, and Disarmament, July 29, 1957 [1]

THE BERLIN DECLARATION

Twelve years have elapsed since the end of the war in Europe. The hopes of the peoples of the world for the establishment of a basis for a just and lasting peace have nevertheless not been fulfilled. One of the basic reasons for the failure to reach a settlement is the continued division of Germany, which is a grave injustice to the German people and the major source of international tension in Europe.

The Governments of France, the United Kingdom and the United States, which share with the Soviet Union responsibility for the reunification of Germany and the conclusion of a peace treaty, and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, as the only Government qualified to speak for the German people as a whole, wish to declare their views on these questions, including the question of European security, and the principles which motivate their policies in this regard.

1. A European settlement must be based on freedom and justice. Every nation has the right to determine its own way of life in freedom, to determine for itself its political, economic and social system, and to provide for its security with due regard to the legitimate interests of other nations. Justice requires that the German people be allowed to re-establish their national unity on the basis of this fundamental right.

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[1] Department of State press release 435, July 29, 1957.

2. The reunification of Germany remains the joint responsibility of the Four Powers who in 1945 assumed supreme authority in Germany, a responsibility which was reaffirmed in the Directive issued by the four Heads of Government in Geneva in July 1955. At the same time the achievement of German reunification requires the active cooperation of the German people as a whole under conditions ensuring the free expression of their will.

3. The unnatural division of Germany and of its capital, Berlin, is a continuing source of international tension. So long as Germany remains divided there can be no German peace treaty and no assurance of stability in Europe. The reunification of Germany in freedom is not only an elementary requirement of justice for the German people, but is the only sound basis of a lasting settlement in Europe.

4. Only a freely elected all-German Government can undertake on behalf of a reunified Germany obligations which will inspire confidence on the part of other countries and which will be considered just and binding in the future by the people of Germany themselves.

5. Such a Government can only be established through free elections throughout Germany for an all-German National Assembly.

6. There should be no discrimination against a reunified Germany. Its freedom and security should not be prejudiced by an imposed status of neutralization or demilitarization. Its Government should be free to determine its foreign policy and to decide on its international associations. It should not be deprived of the right recognized in the Charter of the United Nations for all nations to participate in collective measures of self-defense.

7. Re-establishment of the national unity of Germany in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the German people would not in itself constitute a threat to Germany's neighbors nor would it prejudice their security. Nevertheless, so as to meet any preoccupation which other governments may have in this respect, appropriate arrangements, linked with German reunification, should be made which would take into account the legitimate security interests of all the countries concerned. It was for this reason that, at the Geneva Foreign Ministers' Conference, the Western Powers made proposals for a treaty of assurance on the reunification of Germany.

8. The Western Powers have never required as a condition of German reunification that a reunified Germany should join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It will be for the people of a reunified Germany themselves to determine through their freely elected Government whether they wish to share in the benefits and obligations of the treaty.

9. If the all-German Government, in the exercise of its free choice, should elect to join NATO, the Western Powers after consultation with other members of NATO are prepared to offer on a basis of reciprocity, to the Government of the Soviet Union and the Governments of other countries of Eastern Europe which would become parties to a European security arrangement, assurances of a significant and far-reaching character. The Western Powers are also prepared, as part of a mutually acceptable European security arrangement, to give assurance that, in the event of a reunified Germany choosing to join NATO, they would not take military advantage as a result of the withdrawal of Soviet forces.

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10. But the Western Powers could not contemplate that the existence of NATO itself should constitute the subject of negotiations.

11. The reunification of Germany accompanied by the conclusion of European security arrangements would facilitate the achievement of a comprehensive disarmament agreement. Conversely, if a beginning could be made toward effective measures of partial disarmament, this would contribute to the settlement of outstanding major political problems such as the reunification of Germany. Initial steps in the field of disarmament should lead to a comprehensive disarmament agreement which presupposes a prior solution of the problem of German reunification. The Western Powers do not intend to enter into any agreement on disarmament which would prejudice the reunification of Germany.

12. Any measures of disarmament applicable to Europe must have the consent of the European nations concerned and take into account the link between European security and German reunification. The Four Governments continue to hope that the Soviet Government will come to recognize that it is not in its own interest to maintain the present division of Germany. The Western Powers are ready to discuss all these questions with the Soviet Union at any time that there is a reasonable prospect of making progress. At such time there will be many points relating to the procedure for German reunification and the terms of a treaty of assurance which will be worked out by detailed negotiation.

In advance of serious negotiations the Western Powers cannot finally determine their attitude on all points. Nor can they contemplate in advance the making of concessions to which there is no present likelihood of response from the Soviet side. If negotiations are to be fruitful, both sides must approach them in a spirit of accommodation and flexibility. Through this declaration the Western Powers, in full accord with the Federal Republic, wish again to manifest their sincere desire to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union in order to reach a European settlement and to give evidence that the paramount objective of their policy is the attainment of a just and lasting peace.

Address by the Polish Foreign Minister (Rapacki), on Disarmament, October 2, 1957 [1]

119. It is the hope of the people of Poland, above all else, that the atmosphere of the current session of the General Assembly, the course of the debate, and the results achieved, will help to bring about a further relaxation in the cold war and promote constructive co-operation among nations, irrespective of their social and political systems. We are deeply convinced that in that objective, the vital interests of the Polish people are identical with the interest of all the other Members of the United Nations; and I can assure the President and all the delegations present in this hall that in that spirit the Polish delegation will do its best to make a positive contribution to the deliberations of the twelfth session, and more particularly, to the study of the problems which most directly affect us and with which we are most familiar.

[1] Translated from the French. UN doc. A/PV.697, October 2, 1957. The address was given at the 697th plenary meeting of the General Assembly.