

Reply of the Government of the German Democratic Republic
to the letter of Mr. Helmut KOHL of 27 September 1985

The Government of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the interest in a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which Dr. Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, expressed in his letter of 27 September 1985.

As the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany knows, the German Democratic Republic has, at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, consistently been pronouncing itself for the early conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, as well as on their destruction. It is actively involved in the work of the relevant committee and has submitted specific proposals on how to solve a number of substantive issues. For this reason, the German Democratic Republic is, of course, ready to take up the proposal put forward in the letter of 27 September 1985 to the effect that the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic to the Geneva Conference on Disarmament should conduct talks on the chemical weapons problem. It is the position of the German Democratic Republic that such talks should be focused on the interrelationship between global and regional accords on the prohibition of chemical weapons. At the same time, solutions could be sought to a number of unresolved issues relating to a convention on the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons.

However, the Government of the German Democratic Republic is firmly convinced that, in the face of the imminent danger of a new kind of chemical weapons - binary weapons - being produced and stationed in Central Europe, no opportunity must be missed for regional measures to prohibit chemical weapons. That is why it has proposed, jointly with the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. Such a regional measure would not only promote a worldwide ban on chemical weapons but would also be apt to make a constructive contribution to détente, disarmament and confidence in Europe for the sake of greater security. The participation of the two German States in the creation of a chemical-weapon-free zone in the heart of Europe would be a concrete step towards ensuring that never again will a war start from German soil and that only peace will emanate from there.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic proposes that, parallel to the talks between the delegations in Geneva suggested by Federal Chancellor Dr. Helmut Kohl, authorized representatives of the foreign ministries of the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic should commence consultations on the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone. The time and place of such consultations could be agreed through diplomatic channels.