

1980 s



Meeting of the High Representatives of the Political Advisory Committee of the Warsaw Pact in Berlin on 29 May 1987. From the left: Gustav Husak (Czechoslovakia), Todor Živkov (Bulgaria), Erich Honecker (GDR), Mikhail Gorbachev (USSR), Nicolae Ceaușescu (Romania), Wojciech Jaruzelski (Poland), and János Kádár (Hungary)

*“The Warsaw Pact deepened the political and military division of Europe, and by citing the ‘German threat’ legitimised the permanent stationing of Soviet troops in some member states. The Pact confirmed the complete dependence of satellite countries, giving it an institutional character.”*

Jaroslav Lánik, historian

*“Invading troops controlled all of Czechoslovakia, including airspace, within just 36 hours. Despite its large scale, this invasion – the largest military operation in Europe since the end of World War II – was not primarily a combat operation, but rather a means to pursue political objectives.”*

Jan Pauer, historian,  
evaluating Czechoslovakia’s occupation  
in August 1968



1990 s



Soviet troops leaving  
Czechoslovakia in 1991

## WARSAW PACT COMMANDERS

- Marshal of the Soviet Union Ivan Stepanovič Konev (1955–1960)
- Marshal of the Soviet Union Andrej Antonovič Grečko (1960–1967)
- Marshal of the Soviet Union Ivan Ignatievič Jakubovskij (1967–1976)
- Marshal of the Soviet Union Viktor Georgievič Kulikov (1976–1989)
- Army General Piotr Georgievič Lušev (1989–1991)

## SOVIET TROOPS IN WARSAW PACT MEMBER STATES IN 1990

- Western Army Group (GDR): 337,800
- Middle group of troops (Czechoslovakia): 85,000
- Northern Army Group (Poland): 58,000
- Southern Army Group (Hungary): 31 500

## SOVIET MILITARY BASE IN SLOVAKIA

Bratislava, Jelšava, Komárno, Lešť, Malacky, Modrany, Nemšová, Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Nové Zámky, Rimavská Sobota., Rožňava, Ružomberok, Štúrovo, Vrútky, Zvolen.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Recommended websites:  
[www.upn.gov.sk](http://www.upn.gov.sk); [www.enrs.eu](http://www.enrs.eu)



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## WARSAW PACT

*The Warsaw Pact (officially the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance) was a military-political pact (1955–1991) between Soviet bloc countries. It was officially created in response to the conclusion of the Paris Agreements of 23 October 1954 that led the way to the Federal Republic of Germany joining the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO). However, the Warsaw Pact’s real purpose was to unify the military and foreign policy of the Soviet Union and its satellites in Central and South-Eastern Europe. The Pact ensured Moscow’s control of armed forces in member states, and legalized the presence of Soviet troops in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Poland, Hungary, and from 1968 also Czechoslovakia.*

1955



The Governor's Palace in Warsaw where on 14 May 1955 representatives of the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, GDR and Poland concluded the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance.



Czechoslovak Prime Minister Viliam Široký signs the founding document of the Warsaw Pact



Warsaw Pact armies during the military exercise SUMAVA, 1968

1960 s



Soviet tanks occupying Prague on 21 August 1968



Map showing Warsaw Pact and NATO countries



The Warsaw Pact's emblem



Marshal Ivan Konev (1897–1973), First Commander of the Warsaw Pact Armed Forces



Warsaw Pact military exercise in the 1980s. From the left: East German, Polish, Soviet, Czechoslovak, Bulgarian and Hungarian soldiers

## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WARSAW PACT

The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was signed on 14 May 1955 in Warsaw by representatives of the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the GDR, Poland and Romania. The Pact's twenty-year validity had an automatic ten-year extension for countries that did not withdraw one year before expiry. Whilst the GDR was originally excluded from the Pact's military part, the country became a full member on 28 January 1956.

## MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The Warsaw Pact's supreme political body was the Political Advisory Committee, which comprised member countries' Communist Party leaders, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and defence ministers. The Committee of Defence Ministers was responsible for drafting military exercise plans, harmonizing military regulations, as well as other professional military matters. The Technical Committee was responsible for the modernization of weapons, equipment and technical support, and military hardware. Warsaw Pact armies were controlled by the Moscow-based United Armed Forces Headquarters, which was subordinate to the USSR Armed Forces General Staff.

## MILITARY AND POLITICAL DOCTRINE

In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, Warsaw Pact Member States were committed to refraining from threats- or use of force against other countries. Declassified operational plans nevertheless show that the alliance was also preparing for a massive offensive operation using nuclear weapons, with the aim of occupying Western Europe in a matter of weeks. Warsaw Pact armies regularly participated in military exercises, including in Czechoslovakia: the most famous being code name 'Šumava' in summer 1968 on the eve of military invasion. **This invasion was the largest military operation in Europe since the end of World War II, deploying 27 divisions, 300,000 soldiers, and heavy military equipment including 7,500 tanks.**

Nor did the Pact's leadership respect the obligation not to interfere in member states' internal affairs, independence, or sovereignty. The Warsaw Pact's sole military operation was codenamed „Danube“ – the violent suppression of Czechoslovakia's democratization process in 1968 during which armed forces of the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and the GDR participated actively or indirectly in the occupation of their ally.

## END OF THE WARSAW PACT

Albania had not participated in Warsaw Pact exercises since the Soviet-Chinese rift in 1961, and on 13 September 1968 left the organisation completely in protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia. After Romania also refused to participate in Operation Danube, it remained a Pact member in name only. In May 1985, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was extended for a further 20 years.

In the second half of 1980s, the geopolitical situation in the world has changed. The Soviet Union, as an aftermath of the glasnost and perestroika, set out on a journey of the easing of the military confrontation with the West. Soviets also enabled more independent development of the satellite states in the Central and Eastern Europe.

However, after the collapse of communist regimes in Central and South-Eastern Europe in 1989 and the GDR's demise in October 1990, the continued existence of the Warsaw Pact lost rationale. On 25 February 1991, the Political Advisory Committee approved the dissolution of its military structures, and the underlying political agreement expired on 1 July 1991. Soviet troops that had been deployed in Germany, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia were withdrawn in 1990 – 1993 under bilateral agreements.