

# Hans-Dietrich Genscher's Speech on the Balcony of the West German Embassy in Prague (September 30, 1989)

## Abstract

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In the summer of 1989, thousands of GDR citizens wishing to leave sought refuge in the West German missions in Prague, Warsaw, Budapest and East Berlin. After a few weeks, the hygienic and logistical conditions became untenable, but the GDR government was not prepared to let its citizens leave for the West. As a result, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP) negotiated directly with the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who finally allowed the embassy refugees to leave for West Germany. On September 30, 1989, Genscher announced this decision in his famous speech from the balcony of the German embassy in Prague.

## Source

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/Foreign Minister Genscher in Prague.

/I have come to you to inform you that today your departure... [loud cheers]

/Chancellery Minister Seiters: I think anyone who has seen this is allowed to show emotion, even as a politician. And I would like to say that this is a good hour for many people, for which we are grateful.

/Genscher: I said over there that this is the most moving hour of my political work.

Source: ARD Wochenspiegel, October 10, 1989

[http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/video/video-24726~\\_parentId-mauerfallvideos-101.html](http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/video/video-24726~_parentId-mauerfallvideos-101.html)

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