

Correspondence between Nikolai Bulganin and Konrad Adenauer on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic of Germany (September 13-14, 1955)

Abstract

The Federal Republic and the Soviet Union established full diplomatic relations in September 1955. On this occasion, Konrad Adenauer made it clear to Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin that this did not mean final recognition of the current borders (i.e., of the separation of the German territories east of the Oder-Neisse line, as agreed upon in the Potsdam Agreement of 1945). Moreover, he noted that the West German government was not renouncing its claim to exclusive representation of the entire German nation – meaning that it still refused to recognize the GDR. To keep other countries from recognizing East Germany, West German foreign policy adhered to the so-called Hallstein Doctrine until the 1960s. In accordance with the doctrine, Bonn broke off diplomatic relations with any country (with the exception of the Soviet Union) that recognized the GDR.

Source

Letter from Premier Bulganin to Chancellor Adenauer (September 13, 1955)

In connection with the agreement reached in the course of negotiations between the government delegations of the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic, I have the honor to confirm that the Soviet government has made the decision to establish diplomatic relations with the government of the German Federal Republic and to effect an exchange of diplomatic representatives with the rank of Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Extraordinary.

The Soviet government expresses its confidence that the establishment of diplomatic relations will contribute to the development of mutual understanding and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic in the interests of peace and security in Europe.

The Soviet government is guided by the fact that the establishment and development of normal relations between the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic will contribute to the solution of outstanding problems concerning the whole of Germany and will thus contribute also to the solution of the main common national problems of the German people – the establishment of a united democratic German state.

I deem it necessary to state that the agreement of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic will enter into force from the moment of confirmation by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

I ask you to accept my regards and assurances of my great esteem.

Source: Letter from Premier Bulganin to Chancellor Adenauer (September 13, 1955), reprinted in *Documents on Germany, 1944-1959: Background Documents on Germany, 1944-1959, and a Chronology of Political Developments affecting Berlin, 1945-1956*. Washington, DC: General Printing Office, 1959, p. 155.

Letter from Chancellor Adenauer to Premier Bulganin, Stating Certain Reservations at the Time of

Establishing Diplomatic Relations (September 14, 1955)

Mr. President, on the occasion of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the government of the Federal Republic and the government of the USSR I state:

1. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the government of the USSR does not constitute recognition of the present territorial status on both sides. The final delimitation of the German borders remains reserved to the Peace Treaty.
2. The establishment of diplomatic relations with the government of the Soviet Union does not mean a revision of the legal point of view of the Federal Government regarding its powers to represent the German nation in international affairs and with respect to the political conditions in those German territories which are at present outside of its effective sovereignty.

Source: Letter from Chancellor Adenauer to Premier Bulganin, Stating Certain Reservations at the Time of Establishing Diplomatic Relations (September 14, 1955); reprinted in *Documents on Germany, 1944-1959: Background Documents on Germany, 1944-1959, and a Chronology of Political Developments affecting Berlin, 1945-1956*. Washington, DC: General Printing Office, 1959, p. 156.

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