

International Socialist Division of Labor (June 7, 1962)

Abstract

Under the leadership of Nikita Khrushchev, head of both the CPSU and the Soviet government, efforts to intensify the economic integration of COMECON member states were stepped up in the 1960s. When joint economic planning foundered on Romania's resistance, a system was established that merely coordinated national economic planning.

Source

The Basic Principles of the International Socialist Division of Labor, June 7, 1962

1. The Community of Socialist Countries and the International Socialist Division of Labor

The socialist world system is a social, economic, and political community of free, sovereign peoples striding toward socialism and communism, united through the common ground of their interests and objectives, through the indissoluble ties of international socialist solidarity.

The need for socialist countries to form a close union within a system results from the objective laws of economic and political development.

The community of socialist states is supported by the similar economic foundation of each country (society's ownership of the means of production), by similar state structures (the power of the people with the working class at the forefront), and by a common ideology (Marxism-Leninism).

The united efforts of the nations of the socialist community are aimed at building up socialism and communism, creating a powerful upswing in the national economy of each country and thus within the system as a whole, defending revolutionary achievements as opposed to the machinations of imperialist reaction, and securing a firm peace among nations. The socialist world system has entered a new stage in its development.

The union of socialist states within a common camp, their stronger unity and ever growing power serve to secure the complete victory of socialism and communism within the entire system.

The community of socialist countries is realizing its goals by means of comprehensive political, economic, and cultural cooperation. To this end, all socialist countries are strictly guided by the principles of full equality, mutual respect for independence and sovereignty, fraternal mutual assistance, and mutual benefits. In the socialist camp, no one has, nor can have, any special rights and privileges. Adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism is an essential prerequisite for the successful development of the socialist world system. [...]

Among the socialist countries, different forms of economic cooperation and mutual assistance have developed and are being improved, including the coordination of national economic plans, specialization and cooperation in production, international socialist trade, the granting of loans, technological aid and scientific-technological cooperation, collaborative efforts in constructing economic objects^[1], the tapping of natural resources, and other initiatives. The organizational foundations for economic cooperation are also being constantly improved: The collective organ for the organization of this cooperation—the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [COMECON]—has been

firmly established. [...]

In contrast to the international capitalist division of labor, which is an expression of the exploitation of the weak by the strong, which forms spontaneously in the course of harsh competitive struggle and the expansion of capitalist monopolies, which deepens the inequality in levels of economic development, and which leads to the emergence of a crippled, one-sided economic structure in weakly developed countries, the international socialist division of labor is being implemented, consciously and according to plan, in agreement with the vital interests and tasks relating to the harmonious^[2] and comprehensive development of all socialist countries, and it serves to reinforce their unity. [...]

The communist and workers' parties of the socialist countries emerge as initiators and organizers of the international socialist division of labor. The development and improvement of the international socialist division of labor is one component of the scientifically founded economic policies of the communist and workers' parties of the socialist countries. [...]

2. Coordination of National Economic Plans—the Main Means for the Successful Development and Intensification of the International Socialist Division of Labor

Experiences in developing the socialist world economic system show that the coordination of national economic plans is the main means for the planned intensification of the international socialist division of labor and the ever-tightening union of the production efforts of the socialist countries at the present stage.

Coordinating the plans involves the voluntary, joint, planned activity of the socialist states; this is aimed at the maximum utilization of the political and economic benefits of the socialist world system in the interest of securing the fastest possible victory for socialism and communism. It facilitates the implementation of the policies of the communist and workers' parties; these are built upon the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism, upon the foundation of an in-depth analysis of the options and needs of economic development.

As the experience of economic cooperation among COMECON member-countries shows, the coordination of plans must be aimed at implementing the following interrelated objective development principles of the international socialist division of labor:

- proper consideration for the objectively necessary scope of economic development in each country and the socialist world system as a whole, which contributes to balancing each country's economy;
- securing a high economic advantage for the international socialist division of labor, as expressed by rapid growth in production and by the greatest possible satisfaction of the needs of the population in each country, while expending a minimum of societal effort;
- securing the connection between international specialization in production and the complex (multilateral) development of the economies of individual socialist countries in the interest of the fullest and most expedient utilization of the natural and economic conditions of production, including workforce reserves;
- gradually overcoming historically determined differences in levels of economic development in individual countries, especially by industrializing the countries with relatively low levels of economic development on the basis of maximal use of the internal potential of each country and the advantages of the socialist world system.

A steady increase in the effectiveness of the coordination presupposes that it:

- is carried out both bilaterally and multilaterally. This takes into account that the significance of multilateral coordination will increase in the future;
- deals primarily with prospective plans, which allows for necessary changes in structure, in production

technology, etc., in the interest of intensifying and improving the international socialist division of labor;
—is implemented by the individual countries as they draw up their respective plans;
—provides for measures that assure that coordinated obligations will be satisfied with respect to volume and deadlines for reciprocal deliveries, the quality and technological level of the products to be delivered or of the countries;
—provides for joint measures in a number of countries for resolving major economic and technical questions.

[...]

NOTES

[1] i.e., public or military facilities and buildings—eds.

[2] In this case, “harmonious” essentially means non-antagonistic—eds.

Source: *Europa-Archiv*, Series 15/1962, p. D 381 ff. Republished with permission. The text is also reprinted in Curt Gasteyger, *Europa zwischen Spaltung und Einigung 1945 bis 1993. Darstellung und Dokumentation*. Bonn, 1994, pp. 214–19.

Translation: Allison Brown

Recommended Citation: International Socialist Division of Labor (June 7, 1962), published in: German History in Documents and Images,
<<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/two-germanies-1961-1989/ghdi:document-1163>> [April 30, 2024].