

The 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

Closing speech by Mikhail Gorbachyov

MOSCOW, March 6, TASS: Here follows the closing speech made by Mikhail Gorbachyov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, at the 27th CPSU Congress:

Dear Comrades,

The 27th Congress is drawing to a close.

It is up to history to give an objective assessment of its significance. What can be already said today is that the Congress was held in an atmosphere of Party principledness and unity, exactingness and Bolshevik-style truth, open exposure of shortcomings and oversights, in-depth analysis of domestic and external conditions of the development of our society. It set a high moral, spiritual tone to the activity of the Party, to the life of the entire country.

Delegates, speaking from this rostrum, frankly raised questions sharply revealing everything that hinders our common cause, pulls things back. No few critical opinions were expressed on the performance of all links of the Party, state and economic organisations—both central and local ones. As matter of fact, not a single sphere of our life has been left out of critical analysis. All this, comrades, is in the spirit of the best Party traditions, in the spirit of Bolshevism.

More than six decades ago, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, closing the debate on the political report of the Central Committee of the RCP(B) to the 11th Congress, expressed an idea of principled importance: "All the revolutionary parties that have perished so far, perished because they became conceited, because they failed to see the source of their strength and feared to discuss their weaknesses. We, however, shall not perish, because we are not afraid to discuss our weaknesses and will learn to overcome them."

It is precisely in this way, in Lenin's spirit, that we acted at our Congress. It is precisely in this way that we are going to act in the future as well!

The Congress gave answers to the vital questions raised by life before the Party, before society, and equipped every communist, every Soviet person with a clear vision of the tasks to be resolved. It showed the correctness of our

advancing the concept of socio-economic acceleration at the April plenum. The idea of acceleration permeated all our pre-Congress activity, it was in the centre of attention of the Congress, and was embodied in the Central Committee's political report, the new edition of the Programme of the Party and amendments to its Rules, and the Guidelines for the economic and social development of the country in the 12th five-year period and through to the year 2000. These documents have been wholly backed and approved by the delegates to the Congress.

The adopted and approved general line of the domestic and foreign policies of the Party—the line of accelerating the socio-economic development of the country and strengthening world peace—is the main political result of the 27th CPSU Congress. It is now becoming law in the life of the Party and every Party organisation, a guide to action for the communists, for all the working people.

We understand what high responsibility before history is being invoked by the CPSU, what an immense load it is taking upon itself by putting forward a strategy of acceleration. But we are convinced of the pressing need for precisely such a strategy. We are convinced that it is realistic. Relying on the boundless potentialities and superiority of socialism and on the day-to-day creative activity of the people, we will be able to carry through all our plans.

To achieve the acceleration of the socio-economic development of the country means to give a fresh strong impetus to the growth of the productive forces, to scientific and technical progress and to set in motion the huge reserves of our national economy through perfecting the economic system of socialism.

To achieve acceleration means to ensure the implementation of a vigorous and forceful social policy by closely relating improvement in the living standards of the working people to efficiency in work and by combining comprehensive care for man with the consistent implementation of the principles of social justice.

To achieve acceleration means to open room for the initiative and independent activity of every worker and every work collective through extending democracy, steadily developing the socialist self-government of the people and promoting public openness in the life of the Party and society.

To achieve acceleration means to bring ideological and organisational work closer to man and direct it at overcoming difficulties and fulfilling in practice the tasks facing us by relating that work closer to the real problems of life, by getting rid of windbagery and lecturing and by enhancing one's responsibility for the task in hand.

We, comrades, can and must accomplish all this!

The CPSU is entering the post-Congress period better organised, more cohesive and efficient, with a well-considered long-term policy. It is fully resolved to act purposefully, seeing the entire complexity, large scale and novelty of the tasks facing it, and without fear of any difficulties and impediments.

We have to bring the substance and spirit of the decisions taken by the Congress home to every Soviet person and not only to explain its fundamental provisions but also to organise practical work in line with present-day demands.

Both at our Congress and in the run-up to it very many interesting proposals have been made and quite a few profound ideas voiced. We should carefully examine them and make certain that everything that is valuable and sensible be translated into life.

The most important thing now is to convert the energy of the plans into the energy of concrete actions. A delegate to our Congress, Vasilii Yakovlevich Gorin, chairman of a collective farm in the Belgorod region, spoke well on this score: "Under way throughout the country, in each work collective there is a difficult but, we are sure, irreversible process of renewal and rebuilding. It is going through the hearts and minds of the Soviet people and requires complete dedication from everyone, first of all in work."

Yes, comrades, acceleration, radical transformations in all spheres of our life are not just a slogan but a course the Party will steer firmly and unwaveringly.

Many delegates pointed out that departmentalism, parochialism, paper shuffling and other bureaucratic obstacles are a serious hindrance in the way of things new and progressive. I want to assure you, comrades, that the Central Committee will be resolutely removing all impediments to accelerating social and economic progress, strengthening discipline and order and creating organisational, moral and material prerequisites for an all-out promotion of creative activity, bold quest and socialist enterprise. I am certain that this will find broad and vigorous support on the part of the entire Party and all working people.

The organisers of work to fulfil the tasks set by the Congress are the Party committees from top to bottom. The style needed today is concreteness, efficiency, consistency, the unity of word and deed, the choice of the most effective ways and means, a careful consideration of the people's opinions and a skilful coordinating of the efforts of all public forces.

It is necessary completely to overcome inertness, formalism, apathy, the habit of drowning a living cause in idle and endless roundabout talk, attempts by some people to 'get onto the bandwagon of reconstruction'.

One of the main conclusions of the Congress is

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that all Party committees should act as genuine organs of political leadership. In the final analysis, the success of our entire effort for implementing the general line of the 27th Congress of the Party will be determined by a conscious participation of the broadest mass of the people in communist construction. Everything depends on us, comrades. The time has come for vigorous and concerted action. The Party urges every communist, each Soviet citizen to join actively in the major effort to implement our plans, to perfect Soviet society, to renovate our own socialist home.

Comrades! The Congress has convincingly demonstrated anew that socialism and peace, peace and constructive work cannot be separated from each other. Socialism would not have fulfilled its historical mission if it had not led the battle to rid mankind of the burden of war fears and violence. The main aim of Soviet policy is a secure and just peace for all peoples. We regard the battle against war and military preparations, against advocacy of hatred and violence as an inseparable part of the democratisation of international relations and a genuine improvement of the political climate on this planet.

The nuclear threat made states equal in one aspect—in a large-scale war no one is given to remain safely aside or capitalise on other's misfortune. Equal security is an imperative demand of the time. And efforts to ensure it are increasingly becoming a political task that can be accomplished only by political means. It is time to build international relations between states on a more dependable foundation than that offered by weapons. We see no alternative and we do not seek it.

But regrettably, there are still those in the international community who lay claims to some special, customised security. This is evidenced by the frame of mind in Washington. Appeals to strength, which is regarded—as before—as the most persuasive argument in world politics, are still current there. It seems that someone simply fears the existing opportunity for a radical long-

term improvement in Soviet-American relations, in the international situation as a whole.

It is not the first time that we have encountered such a situation. Of course the militarist, aggressive forces would prefer to freeze, perpetuate, confrontation now as well. And what, comrades, are we to do? Slam the door? It cannot be ruled out that that is exactly the sort of thing

Communique on plenum of CPSU Central Committee

A plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, elected by the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was held on March 6, 1986.

The plenum unanimously elected Comrade Mikhail Gorbachyov General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

The plenum elected the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee of the following composition:

Members of the Political Bureau

Mikhail Gorbachyov, Geidar Aliyev, Vitali Vorotnikov, Andrei Gromyko, Lev Zaikov, Dinmukhamed Kunayev, Yegor Ligachyov, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Mikhail Solomentsev, Viktor Chebrikov, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Vladimir Shcherbitsky.

Alternate members of the Political Bureau

Pyotr Demichev, Vladimir Dolgikh, Boris Yeltsin, Nikolai Slyunkov, Sergei Sokolov, Yuri Solovyov, and Nikolai Talyzin.

The following were elected secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee:

Mikhail Gorbachyov—General Secretary, Alexandra Biryukova, Anatoli Dobrynin, Vladimir Dolgikh, Lev Zaikov, Mikhail Zimyanin, Yegor Ligachyov, Vadim Medvedev, Viktor Nikonov, Georgi Razumovsky, and Alexander Yakovlev.

The plenum endorsed Mikhail Solomentsev as Chairman of the Party Control Committee at the CPSU Central Committee. (TASS) □

they are pressing us to do. But we are excellently aware of our responsibility for the fate of the country, for the fate of peace. And for this reason we do not intend to play up to those who would want to make mankind grow accustomed to the nuclear threat and the arms race.

Soviet foreign policy is oriented at searching for mutual understanding, at dialogue and the assertion of peaceful coexistence as a universal norm in relations between states. We also have a clear idea of how to achieve this and a concrete programme of work in the name of preserving and asserting peace.

The Soviet Union acts and will act in the world arena seriously and openly, vigorously and honestly. We intend to press insistently and imaginatively for the liquidation of nuclear arms, for a radical limitation of the arms race, for the creation of a reliable international security equal for all states. The instruction to preserve peace and curb the arms race sounded forcefully and passionately in the speeches of the delegates of our Congress. The Party will undeviatingly adhere to this mandate.

We appeal to the leaders of states of the other social system to approach with responsibility the key problem of present-day world politics—the problem of war and peace.

The leadership of the CPSU and the Soviet State will do everything to secure for our people the possibility to work in conditions of lasting peace and freedom. Our Party, the Land of Soviets, as the Congress has confirmed once again, has many allies and supporters abroad, partners in the struggle for peace, freedom and mankind's progress.

We are sincerely glad to see here the leaders of the socialist states. Let me, on behalf of the Congress, express sincere gratitude to the communist parties and peoples of these countries for their solidarity with the CPSU and the Soviet Union.

For a number of fraternal parties of socialist states this is also the year of a congress. The problems and tasks set by history before the ruling communist parties have much in common. And by responding to them, every party makes its contribution to the common treasure-house of combined experience of world socialism. We wish you success, dear friends!

The CPSU is grateful for the warm words addressed to it by representatives of communist, revolutionary-democratic, socialist and social-democratic parties, democratic, liberation, anti-war forces and movements. We highly appreciate their understanding of and support for the idea, put forward by the Congress, of establishing an all-embracing international security system, and for the plan for eliminating nuclear weapons before the end of this century. The CPSU is convinced that they meet the real interests of all peoples, all countries, all mankind.

Comrades, our Congress has shown that at the present crucial stage of social development the Leninist Party measures up to its historic tasks. On behalf of the delegates representing all our Party, I want to say from this rostrum: we, communists, prize the trust placed in us by the working class, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, all Soviet people. We place above all else the interests of the people, of the homeland, of socialism and peace. We shall spare no strength, no energies to translate the decisions of the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union into life. □

Mikhail Gorbachyov's speech at reception for Congress guests

MOSCOW, March 6, TASS:

MIKHAIL GORBACHYOV, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, on behalf of the Party's Central Committee, greeted the foreign guests at the 27th CPSU Congress. He spoke today at a reception in the Kremlin in honour of the delegations of the parties that took part in the work of the Congress.

"The Congress determined the CPSU's general line at an exceptionally responsible, in fact crucial, stage of the country's development—the line of accelerating social and economic development and strengthening peace on Earth," Mikhail Gorbachyov said.

He stressed that regardless of what issues of a domestic or foreign policy nature the Leninist Party was solving, it always viewed itself as an inseparable part of all revolutionary, democratic, progressive forces.

"We take into account that every success, every victory in the struggle for the aims and ideals of the October Revolution strengthen the potential of peace and social progress," Mikhail Gorbachyov went on. "The CPSU, as was stressed by the Congress, sees in this its main internationalist duty, and will fulfil it to the end."

"The problems of war and peace and of removing the nuclear threat were among the central topics at the Congress. Nuclear catastrophe must be averted. It is necessary and possible to build a world without threats, a world of good-neighbourliness in which every people would take a worthy and respectable place. It is for such a world that the Soviet Union is striving and wants to be part of. And the Congress confirmed this.

"We are glad that the 27th Congress of the CPSU was attended by representatives of almost all communist, revolutionary-democratic, many socialist, social-democratic and labour parties," Mikhail Gorbachyov said. "We are glad that people belonging to the principal public trends and movements opposed to war have gathered in Moscow for our Congress."

In conclusion the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee cordially thanked the guests of the 27th Congress and the parties and organisations represented by them for their co-operation. □

EMBASSY STATEMENT ON VITALI YURCHENKO

The Soviet Embassy in London today issued the following statement:

"The Embassy categorically refutes the allegations made in some British media regarding Soviet citizen Vitali Yurchenko. They are gross fabrications, which have no basis in fact whatsoever and are designed solely to tarnish the image of the Soviet Union.

"Vitali Yurchenko is alive, well and works normally."

(March 11, 1986.)

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