

**October 23, 1980**

**Memorandum of Conversations between Socialist  
Unity Party of German General Secretary Erich  
Honecker and Sultan Ali Keshtmand, Member of the  
Politburo of the People's Democratic Party of  
Afghanistan (PDPA)**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum of Conversations between Socialist Unity Party of German General Secretary Erich Honecker and Sultan Ali Keshtmand, Member of the Politburo of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA)", October 23, 1980, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Stiftung Archiv der Partei- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2367, pp. 66-7. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/117261>

**Summary:**

Honecker and Keshtmand discuss the current situation in Afghanistan after the coup and Soviet invasion. Honecker compares it to East Germany's tenuous international position after 1945.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

23 October 1980

Conversation of Erich HONECKER, General Secretary ZK SED with Sultan Ali KISHTMAND, Politburo member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan<sup>[1]</sup>

Comrade Keshtmand unfortunately provided only a short evaluation of the present situation in the DRA: since the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee of the DPPA in August of this year at which wide-reaching decisions were taken on destroying the counter-revolution, good conditions for the fighting off of the counter-revolution have come about. The fighting spirit of the party, mass organizations and the people has increased. Naturally, in this connection, it must be mentioned that the USSR provides help in every area and in every matter. [...]

Comrade Erich Honecker responded to the greetings of Comrade Babrak Karmal in the most heart-felt manner. Comrade Babrak Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union is being followed very attentively in the GDR [German Democratic Republic].<sup>[2]</sup> The party and state leadership are happy with its positive outcome. They hope that Comrade Babrak Karmal will visit the GDR soon.

It is good that the internal situation in the DRA is stabilizing. Both from an international standpoint and keeping in view that a contingent of Soviet military forces are stationed in the DRA, a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem is necessary. Such a settlement requires appropriate guarantees. In view of the policies of Pakistan and Iran, reactionary Arab states and the Islamic Conference, this will not be an easy task. The party and state leadership of the GDR assume that the Soviet troop contingent will stay in the DRA as long as necessary.

The GDR understands Afghanistan's position well. The GDR had many enemies after 1945. Without the armed defense by the Soviet Union, she could not have existed. Only after twenty years did the GDR have her international breakthrough. Today she is recognized worldwide, a member of the UN and the Security Council and many other international institutions. The inner stability of the DRA will be strengthened on the basis of the policy of the party and the government under the leadership of comrade Babrak Karmal. Imperialism will have to accept that Afghanistan is a sovereign and independent state. The DRA and the USSR were in the right when they invoked their international treaties. The Chinese can be indignant and make trouble, but no more. The strength of the USSR and the other states of the socialist community is great. The SED and the people of the GDR will support all measures for the reinstitution of the sovereignty of the Afghani people on a revolutionary basis.

<sup>[1]</sup> This conversation took place in the wings of the international scientific conference that took place in Berlin from 20-24 October 1980 and was called "The mutual battle for social progress of the workers' movement and the anti-imperialist peoples' liberation movement." See DY30/2367, p.43.

<sup>[2]</sup> Babrak Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union took place from 15 October -5 November.