

# **USSR:**

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# **SIXTY YEARS**

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# **OF THE UNION**

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# **1922-1982**

A Collection of Legislative Acts  
and Other Documents

With an introduction by Mikhail Georgadze,  
Secretary of the Presidium  
of the USSR Supreme Soviet



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## INTRODUCTION

On 30 December 1982 it will be 60 years since the founding of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an event that has an outstanding place in the history of the Soviet state because of its political importance and socio-economic consequences.

The Soviet Union is a multinational state whose population consists of more than a hundred equal, fraternal peoples.

As a result of the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 a brotherhood of workingmen was born and waxed strong for the first time in history, a brotherhood of people of labour, united, whatever their nationality, by a community of class interests and aims.

On 8 November 1917 the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets, which legislatively secured the transfer of power to the working people, declared in its appeal "To Workers, Soldiers and Peasants!" that Soviet power guarantees "all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination".

The Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia adopted on 15 November 1917 gave legislative sanction to Lenin's principles that underlie Soviet national policy: the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia; their right to free self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of an independent state; the abolition of all and every national and national-religious privilege and restriction; free development of the national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting Russia.

The Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People adopted by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets declared that "the Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics".

The Russian Federation laid the foundations for fraternal friendship and cooperation of all the nations and nationalities emancipated by the October Revolution from social and national oppression. It became the rallying centre of the Soviet republics.

The experience of dealing with the national question in the RSFSR was invaluable for consolidating amity and trust between all the nations and nationalities of the Soviet state.

After the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution on the territory of old tsarist Russia in circumstances of bitter, violent strug-

gle against nationalist capitalist "governments" and foreign invaders, the working people of the previously oppressed nations founded their own national Soviet republics—*independent socialist states*.

In December 1917 the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed at the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets. On 1 January 1919 the Byelorussian SSR was founded, in 1920 the Azerbaijan and Armenian Soviet Socialist Republics, in February 1921 the Georgian SSR. There were also the Khorezm and Bukhara People's Republics. It took comparatively little time to establish, in December 1918, Soviet power in the Baltic area, and Soviet Republics of Estland, Lithuania, and Latvia were founded. However, Soviet power was suppressed in the Baltic Republics by the forces of internal counter-revolution and foreign imperialist intervention, and they were separated from the fraternal Soviet Socialist Republics for 20 years.

The Soviet government steadily implemented the right of nations to self-determination proclaimed legislatively. Evidence of that was recognition of the state independence of Finland and Poland, and proclamation of the political equality of the peoples inhabiting the Soviet land and their right to secede and create national states. In accordance with Lenin's principles on the national question, the RSFSR recognised the independence and self-government of the other Soviet republics and extended them assistance of every kind.

The Socialist Revolution cleared the road to unity, casting aside the policy of deceit and mistrust, and abolishing colonial oppression. Unlimited possibilities for strengthening the amity of both large and small peoples, and their really free development, are inherent in the very nature of Soviet power and socialism. The young Soviet republics immediately established broad links with one another after coming into being.

The resolution of the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets "On Self-Determination of the Ukraine", adopted on 12 December 1917, declared that the Congress would fight "for a Ukrainian Worker-Peasant Republic based on close solidarity between the working people of the Ukraine, irrespective of their national affiliation, and the working people of all Russia".

The first acts of the Soviet republics expressed a desire to establish federal relations with the RSFSR and between the republics themselves. The First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, for instance, resolved to open negotiations with the Russian Soviet Republic on establishing federative ties between it and Soviet Byelorussia, and called on all the fraternal independent socialist republics to follow the example of the workers and peasants of Byelorussia and open negotiations to establish federal ties with Soviet Russia and between themselves.

The movement for unification of the independent republics was strengthened by a number of circumstances. During the Civil War unification of the military forces of the republics with those of the RSFSR had begun on the initiative of the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and other Soviet republics.

The resolution of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of 18 May 1919 "On Joining the Military Forces of the Soviet Republics" proclaimed: "1) All existing Soviet republics should wage a joint armed struggle against the enemies of the Soviet republics. 2) All material resources necessary to wage this struggle should be concentrated in a single centre." The Central Executive Committee of the Ukraine charged its Presidium to propose to the Central Executive Committees of the other Soviet republics to develop concrete forms for organising the revolutionary struggle.

Meeting the wishes of the Soviet republics, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee issued a decree on 1 June 1919 recognising the need to unify military organisations and commands, National Economic Councils, railway administration and the finance and labour commissariats of the republics so that administration of these sectors would be concentrated in joint boards. The unification was to be carried out by agreement of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Councils of People's Commissars of the Soviet republics.

In 1920-21 treaties were signed between the RSFSR and the other Soviet republics that prepared the ground for closer political unity. The treaties provided for the unification of the people's commissariats for military affairs, foreign trade, railways, finance, and labour. Joint diplomatic missions abroad were instituted. The national Soviet republics empowered the RSFSR to represent them at international conferences like that at Genoa.

At the same time federal ties were consolidated between the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics. The Azerbaijan, Armenian, and Georgian SSRs united in the Federal Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia on 12 March 1922, which was converted in December of the same year into the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR).

The period 1921-22 was one of the most complicated times in the life of the Communist Party and Soviet state. The interventionists and White Guards had only just been expelled from the Soviet land, but the danger of military attack from outside had not been removed. The internal position was extremely grave.

The tasks of defending the country's sovereignty, liquidating economic dislocation, and building socialism constantly called for the closest unity of the economies, policies, and all the resources of the

Soviet republics, and their joint diplomatic efforts. The Soviet peoples were straining for constitutional unity.

In the course of 1917-1922 valuable experience of fraternal co-operation between the Soviet republics was accumulated, and all the conditions and premises for their unification in a single, federal state had been created.

Lenin made a most important contribution to the founding of the USSR. He worked out the principles of the Communist Party's nationalities policy. He directly led the work of the Party and Soviet government to implement this policy in practice, directing the building of Soviet statehood.

In his theses for the Second Congress of the Communist International in June 1920 Lenin had pointed out three groups of objective reasons requiring unification of the Soviet republics in a single union state:

(1) the impossibility of their continuing to exist, "surrounded as they are by the imperialist powers of the whole world", "without the closest alliance";

2) the need for "a close economic alliance between the Soviet republics" without which it was impossible to restore the shattered economy and ensure the "well-being of the working people";

3) the class nature of Soviet power, and its international nature, which were impelling the masses of the working people toward unity.<sup>1</sup>

The Communist Party's decisions on this matter were based on these propositions of Lenin's. The Tenth Communist Party Congress, convened in March 1921, stressed the expediency of federation as the highest form of constitutional union of the Soviet republics.

Lenin spoke decisively against the "autonomisation" plan, which envisaged the Soviet republics' joining the RSFSR with the rights of autonomous republics.

Defending the uniting of the Soviet republics on the principles of voluntariness and sovereign equality, Lenin demonstrated the need to create a new alliance, a federation of equal republics.

Lenin suggested formulating a proposal to create a new constitutional entity, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as a voluntary alliance of equal, sovereign nations, rather than admitting the Soviet republics to the RSFSR. "We consider ourselves," he wrote, "the Ukrainian SSR and others, equal, and enter with them, on an equal basis, into a new union, a new federation."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and the Colonial Questions," *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Progress Publishers, Moscow, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "On the Establishment of the U.S.S.R.," *Collected Works*, Vol. 42, pp. 421-22.

On 27 September 1922, in a letter to members of the Politbureau, Lenin formulated the idea of founding a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, set out a draft of the main principles of the constitutional structure of the new federal state, and put forward the idea of creating a federal supreme authority, the Central Executive Committee.

The question of forming the USSR was widely discussed by the working people of the Soviet republics. The discussion revealed the republics' desire to unite in a federal state.

The need to found a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was dictated by the objective course of historical development and the basic interests of all the Soviet republics. The movement to create the Union, initiated by the Communists, was truly nation-wide. The leading force in it was the working class, which rallied round itself the labouring peasantry, the progressive intelligentsia, and the working people of all the Soviet republics.

In December 1922 the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets was convened, which adopted a declaration on the forming of the USSR. The same month the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets was convened, which also passed a resolution on the forming of the USSR. The Fourth All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, which discussed this matter and passed a corresponding resolution, was convened on 18 December 1922.

On 27 December 1922 the Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets opened; one of the items of its agenda was the proposal of the republics to create a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Congress recognised the uniting of the republics in such a Union to be timely, and resolved that the unification should be based "on the principle of voluntary accession and equal rights of the Republics, each of them reserving the right of free secession from the Union of Republics".

On 29 December 1922 a conference of the plenipotentiary delegations elected by the Congresses of Soviets of the RSFSR, Ukrainian SSR, TSFSR, and Byelorussian SSR was convened in the Grand Kremlin Palace in Moscow.

At the conference the texts of a draft Declaration on the formation of the USSR and a draft Treaty on the formation of the USSR, which had previously been considered by the republics' delegations and proposed by the heads of delegations for consideration by the conference were read out.

After an exchange of opinions the conference approved the draft Declaration and draft Treaty. On 30 December 1922 they were signed by the heads of the plenipotentiary delegations before the opening of the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR.

The Congress opened on 30 December 1922 at 1.00 p. m. in the

Bolshoi Theatre, and ratified the Declaration and the Treaty on the formation of the USSR. The Treaty said that the republics "conclude the present Treaty of Union to form one federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics'".

The Treaty was based on the principles of the equality of the Soviet republics and their voluntary entry into the federal state. It stipulated that ratification and amendment of the Union Treaty lay exclusively within the competence of the Congress of Soviets of the USSR. Therefore all matters of amendment to the Treaty, of the structure and competence of the bodies of the USSR, and of the admission of new republics to the USSR were subsequently to be decided legislatively by the supreme bodies of state authority of the USSR.

The Treaty had 26 articles, which set forth the subjects of the competence of the Union in the person of its supreme bodies, the procedure of elections to All-Union Congresses of Soviets and to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, the structure of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, the composition of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, and the mutual relations between the supreme bodies of the republics. The Treaty also defined the relations between the People's Commissariats of republics and the all-Union People's Commissariats, and a number of other matters.

The First Congress of Soviets only ratified the Declaration and the Treaty on the formation of the USSR in principle. A resolution of the Congress stipulated that "in view of the extraordinary importance of the Declaration thus adopted and the Treaty hereby concluded and the desirability of hearing the final opinion of all republics forming part of the Union of Republics on the text of the present Treaty, the Declaration and the Treaty shall be referred to the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics for additional hearing so that the comments of the Union Republics could be submitted to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR at its next regular session".

The First Congress of Soviets charged the next session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR to examine the opinions received, to ratify the text of the Declaration and Treaty, and to put them in force immediately. The Central Executive Committee of the USSR was to submit the final text of the Declaration and Treaty to the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union for ratification.

The forming of the USSR was an important event in the history of the Soviet state and in the life of all working people. That outstanding Soviet statesman and Party leader, Mikhail Kalinin, characterising the historical significance of the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR

and the formation of the USSR in his closing speech at the Congress, said: "First of all, this Union Congress gives us the chance to strengthen our material resources in order to counterbalance the capitalist world hostile to us. Second, the uniting of the Soviet republics also strengthens the real significance of the Soviet republics politically in face of the whole capitalist world. And finally, third, we have laid the first stone here of a really fraternal community."<sup>1</sup>

The Second Congress of Soviets was held in January and February 1924. It unanimously resolved to ratify the Constitution of the USSR. The Constitution included both the Declaration on the Formation of the USSR and the Treaty of Union.

The Treaty on the formation of the USSR, which constituted the main part of the 1924 Constitution of the USSR, was a new advance, compared with the text of the Treaty ratified by the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR, along the road to legislative consolidation of the union of the Soviet republics in a federal state. It defined the structure and functions of the federal constitutional bodies and demarcated the competence of the USSR and the Union republics.

The 1924 Constitution of the USSR established that the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, which was the supreme body of the Union between USSR Congresses of Soviets, should consist of two chambers—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

The Soviet of the Union was elected by the Congress of Soviets of the USSR from representatives of the Union republics in proportion to their population. The Soviet of Nationalities was formed of representatives of the Union and autonomous republics and autonomous regions on the basis of five representatives from each Union republic, five representatives from each autonomous republic, and one representative from each autonomous region. The composition of the Soviet of Nationalities as a whole was approved by the Congress of Soviets.

The establishment of the Soviet of Nationalities was an important guarantee for ensuring the interests of the Union and autonomous republics, autonomous regions, and subsequently, autonomous areas.

As we have already noted, four republics originally constituted the USSR, viz., the RSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR, the Byelorussian SSR, and the TSFSR.

Subsequently, the fraternal family of Soviet republics was extended. The process of national self-determination of peoples and moulding their national statehood continued.

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<sup>1</sup> M. I. Kalinin, *Izbranniye proizvedeniya* (Selected Works), Politizdat, Moscow, 1975, p. 53.

Up to 1924 there had been three state formations on the territory of Central Asia and part of Kazakhstan, viz., the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Republic within the RSFSR, and the independent Bukhara and Khorezm People's Soviet Republics. The last two did not at first join the USSR, but their economic and cultural development proceeded with the help of the whole Soviet Union. These three republics were founded after the Great October Socialist Revolution within the administrative boundaries of the former Turkestan Governor-Generalship, the Bukhara Emirate, and the Khiva Khanate. Their boundaries did not coincide with the ethnic boundaries of the peoples living in Central Asia.

After the October Revolution, with successful socio-economic development and growth of national independence of the peoples of Turkestan, Bukhara, and Khorezm, the issue arose of creating more auspicious conditions for their national consolidation.

The forming of national states in Central Asia during state demarcation there was of a democratic, voluntary character. The proposals on the need to carry out a national-state demarcation came in practice from the local organisations themselves.

Taking the will of the indigenous population of Central Asia and Kazakhstan into account and guided by a decision of the Politbureau of the Communist Party Central Committee, the Central Executive Committee of the USSR granted the petitions of the Turkestan Central Executive Committee, and of the All-Bukhara and All-Khorezm Kurultais to carry out a demarcation of national states.

The government authorities of the RSFSR took a consistent internationalist stand on this matter. A resolution of the second session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (11th convocation, October 1924) granted the peoples of Central Asia the right to secede from the RSFSR and form independent or autonomous republics as they wished. This resolution was approved by the Twelfth Congress of Soviets of the RSFSR.

The newly formed Soviet Socialist Republics—the Uzbek and the Turkmen—were admitted to the USSR in accordance with their applications to the Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR in May 1925.

During the building of socialism the Tajik Autonomous Republic was converted into a Union republic (in 1929).

Lenin's principles of a voluntary union of Soviet republics were consolidated in the 1936 Constitution of the USSR, which marked an important step in the further development of the USSR as a united federal state.

With the adoption of the 1936 Constitution the Azerbaijan, Georgian, and Armenian SSRs became constituent republics of the USSR,

in which connection the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Republic was wound up, having performed its historical role and fully coped with the tasks set it. The Kazakh and Kirghiz Autonomous Republics were converted into Union republics and joined the USSR.

In 1940, the Baltic Republics—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—having taken the road of building socialism, joined the USSR as Union republics.

In the same year the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Republic, which had become part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1924, was converted, after reunification with Bessarabia, into an independent Union republic and joined the USSR.

The amity and indestructible union of the Soviet peoples withstood severe tests during the Great Patriotic War, and have proved their strength in the years of peaceful socialist construction.

Now 15 equal Soviet Socialist Republics are united in the USSR.

The 1977 Constitution of the USSR secured the main features of developed socialist society and of the Soviet state of the whole people. It was an important new stage in the development of the USSR, proclaiming that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principles of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

Like the 1924 and 1936 Constitutions, the new Constitution of the USSR secures each Union republic the right to secede freely from the USSR.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has existed for 60 years. This anniversary is being marked by its 15 Union republics and their 38 constituent national-state formations, viz., 20 autonomous republics, 8 autonomous regions, and 10 autonomous areas, each of which, irrespective of its population, is directly represented in the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The Soviet of Nationalities is elected on the basis of the following representation: 32 deputies from each Union republic, 11 deputies from each autonomous republic, five deputies from each autonomous region, and one deputy from each autonomous area.

The Constitution of the USSR guarantees representation of the Union republics in the supreme bodies of state authority of the USSR.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR includes 15 Vice-Chairmen, one from each Union republic (Art. 120).

The Union Government includes the Chairmen of the Councils of Ministers of the Union republics (Art. 129).

The Supreme Court of the USSR includes the Chairmen of the Supreme Courts of the Union republics (Art. 153).

These constitutional provisions legislatively ensure that allowance will be made for the interests and views of the Union republics in the supreme bodies of the country, and further the strengthening of their ties within the multinational federal state.

The years of socialist construction made great changes in the life of the peoples of the Soviet state.

The age-old economic, technical, and cultural backwardness of the previously oppressed peoples has been successfully overcome. Soviet power converted the once neglected periphery of the old Russian empire into industrially developed socialist republics. The peoples of Central Asia, for instance, and of certain other underdeveloped national areas of the country, have successfully passed to socialism, within the multinational state, skipping the stage of capitalist development.

In the early Soviet years economic and social policy was based on raising the former outlying national regions of Russia as rapidly as possible to the level of development of the central areas. And that goal has been successfully realised. The close cooperation of all the nations of the country, and above all the selfless aid of the Russian people, played a most important role in that. Kazakhstan, for example, in the past a backward agrarian outskirts, has now risen to fourth place in industrial development in the USSR, and is one of the country's biggest centres of the coal, oil, light, and food industries, and a main base of the non-ferrous metal industry. As a result of the ploughing up of virgin and long-fallow lands the Kazakh SSR holds a leading place in the production of cereals and livestock products. It produces as much industrial output in half-a-day as was produced within its boundaries in the whole of 1920. In the Tenth Five-Year Plan period (1976-80) more than 250 modern industrial plants, big shops, and production units were commissioned there, which produce 30 per cent of the total output of copper, 50 per cent of the output of zinc, and more than 70 per cent of the output of lead.

Immense socio-economic changes have taken place in the republics of Central Asia. There, where the farmworker knew only gruelling manual toil before 1917, electricity supply per 100 hectares of arable land is now double the average for the whole USSR.

The Constitution of the USSR says: "The economy of the USSR is an integral economic complex comprising all the elements of social production, distribution, and exchange on its territory" (Art. 16).

The dedicated labour of the Soviet people has created a powerful

economic base in the country, resting on a multi-sector industry, large-scale socialist agriculture, and advanced Soviet science. Skilled cadres of workers and economic specialists have been trained.

In 1979, as much social product was produced in five days in the USSR as in the whole of 1913 in Russia. In one day an amount of electricity was generated that took over a year and a half before the Revolution, as much artificial fertiliser was made as took three years, as much cement as took 69 days, oil (and gas condensate) as took 57 days, steel as took 34 days.

The Soviet Union possesses enormous natural wealth, valued at more than 2.5 trillion roubles (not counting the value of land and forests). And that in spite of the vast losses caused by the war, which amounted to 30 per cent of the country's national wealth.

The Soviet Union now produces more industrial output than the whole world did in 1950.

This gigantic economic growth is the result of the work of the multimillion, multinational Soviet people.

The advances in their economic development became possible through the cooperation and mutual aid of all the nations and nationalities of the country in building the new society. The strength of their solidarity gave a prodigious impetus to the development of all the republics.

A very important achievement of developed socialist society has been the moulding of a new historical community of people—the Soviet people—on the basis of the *de jure* and *de facto* equality of all the nations and nationalities of the USSR.

National differences have not, however, been wiped out in today's conditions, and are allowed for in the historically established forms of national statehood now consolidated in the Constitution. The Constitution of the USSR contains a number of provisions guaranteeing allowance for the national features of the peoples of the Soviet State. Article 116, for example, stipulates that laws of the USSR and other acts of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be published in the languages of the Union republics. Article 159 provides for court proceedings to be carried on in the language of the Union or autonomous republic, autonomous region, or autonomous area, or in the language of the majority of the local population.

In accordance with the Constitution of the USSR and the Constitutions of the Union republics, statutes on autonomous regions have been passed by the Supreme Soviets of the Union republics concerned, and in the RSFSR a Statute on Autonomous Areas, in which the features of these forms of autonomy have been given expression.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the

Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Leonid Brezhnev stressed in the Central Committee's Report to the 26th CPSU Congress: "The national sensibilities and national dignity of every person are respected in our country. The CPSU has fought and will always resolutely fight against such attitudes alien to the nature of socialism as chauvinism or nationalism, against any nationalistic aberration, be it, say, anti-Semitism or Zionism. We are against tendencies aimed at an artificial obliteration of national identities. And, to a similar extent, we consider their artificial inflation inadmissible. It is the Party's sacrosanct duty to educate the people in a spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, to foster a sense of pride in belonging to the great integral Soviet Union."<sup>1</sup>

The socialist system in the USSR has ensured overcoming of the age-old backwardness of the peoples of the former national periphery in education, science, and culture, and their prodigiously rapid advance.

Striking advances were made by the peoples in the sphere of cultural development in the course of building socialism. Now all the Soviet republics have achieved almost 100 per cent literacy. Before the October Revolution many of the nationalities did not even have a system of writing for their languages, and consequently had no written literature.

Today books and booklets are published in 89 indigenous languages of the USSR.

In the Kirghiz SSR, for example, whose people acquired an alphabet as a result of the October Revolution, millions of copies of books and pamphlets, 60 newspapers, 17 magazines, and other periodicals are published in Kirghiz.

In the Dagestan ASSR, whose population numbers a little more than 1,500,000, dozens of newspapers and magazines are published in its national languages.

In the USSR, each republic has a network of general schools, vocational and technical schools, specialised secondary schools, higher schools, research institutes, publishing houses, libraries, theatres and cinemas. Academies of Sciences have been founded in all the Union republics.

All the peoples of the USSR have achieved a high standard of education in Soviet times. Universal compulsory secondary education

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow, February 23-March 3, 1981*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, pp. 73-74.

is being implemented. All the socialist nations have millions-strong contingents of skilled workers, farmers, engineers and technicians, scientific workers, intellectuals, and cultural and educational workers.

Soviet culture is the culture of developed socialist nations and nationalities rallied in a new international, social community, the Soviet people.

The elimination of illiteracy and semi-literacy, the wide spread of education and of scientific knowledge among the populations of the republics, the unparalleled development of literature, art, and science, the moulding of a national intelligentsia, and the affirmation of the principles of socialist ideology in the whole intellectual and spiritual life of society, have all been of paramount importance in shaping the culture of the peoples of the USSR, socialist in content and national in form.

The inimitable social and historical experience of a nation, and the features of its psychology and outlook on the world, are crystallised in a culture's national scale of values. At the same time the flourishing of national cultures in the USSR is inextricably linked with socialist internationalism. The culture of the nations and nationalities of the USSR, while maturing in national forms, is being further developed, interpreting in its own way both the social and cultural experience of its own people and the achievements of the other peoples of the USSR and of world culture.

With the triumph of the October Revolution the old alienation and mutual distrust gave way in the relations between nations and nationalities to amity, mutual aid, and all-round intercommunication, embodied in the social and international unity of the Soviet people. The national features of the peoples, reflecting specific moments of the social, moral, and cultural experience of their historical development, have not estranged nations and nationalities in these circumstances but on the contrary have brought them together and mutually enriched them, i.e., internationalised them.

The formation and development of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is not only the glorious historical past of the Soviet people but also their present and future.

The USSR, an integral, federal, multinational state, now embodies the state unity of the Soviet people, and is rallying all its nations and nationalities in order to build communism.

Soviet experience of dealing with the national question is a reliable historical compass for all peoples struggling for self-determination against colonialism and neocolonialism and for deliverance from social oppression. This experience has convincingly demonstrated the insepar-

arability of the social and national problems, has shown that true national liberation is only possible on the basis of social emancipation, and has confirmed the correctness and unshakability of Marxism-Leninism's conclusions on the national question.

The present collection contains the main statutes and legislative acts dealing with the formation and development of the USSR as an integral, federal, multinational state, from the first years of Soviet power to our day. Many of the acts are presented in the form of excerpts relating to the founding and evolution of the USSR; provisions not related to the subject of this volume have been abridged, or omitted.

Excerpts from the constitutions now in force in the Union republics have also been included so that the reader can get a full idea of these republics as sovereign states voluntarily united in an integral federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In addition we considered it necessary to reproduce here the Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU "On the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", adopted on 21 February 1982, which is not a legislative act, but gives a political and theoretical assessment of the great and complex path traversed by the multinational Soviet state from the time of its formation to the present day.

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*M. S. Gerasimov*

# I

## THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE FORMATION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS

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### Chapter I

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RSFSR, THE FIRST REPUBLIC OF SOVIETS. DECREES ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

##### APPEAL

OF THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

##### TO WORKERS, SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS!

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has opened. The vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress. A number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets are also present. The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated. Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes power into its own hands.

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the members of the Provisional Government have already been arrested.

The Soviet government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all the nations and an immediate armistice on all fronts. It will secure the transfer of the land of the landed proprietors, the crown and the monasteries to the peasant committees without compensation; it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production; it will ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the time appointed; it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and prime necessities to the villages; it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be vigilant and firm. The Congress of Soviets is convinced that the revolutionary army will be able to defend the revolution against all attacks of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds in con-

cluding a democratic peace, which it will propose directly to all peoples. The new government will do everything to fully supply the revolutionary army by means of a determined policy of requisitions and taxation of the propertied classes, and also will improve the condition of soldiers' families.

The Kornilov men—Kerensky, Kaledin and others—are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. Several detachments, whom Kerensky had moved by deceiving them, have come over to the side of the insurgent people.

*Soldiers, actively resist Kerensky the Kornilovite! Be on your guard!*

*Railwaymen, hold up all troop trains dispatched by Kerensky against Petrograd!*

*Soldiers, workers in factory and office, the fate of the revolution and the fate of the democratic peace is in your hands!*

*Long live the revolution!*

8 November 1917

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*  
(Congresses of Soviets in Documents).  
Collection, Vol. 1, 1959, pp. 8-9

## THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

### DECREE ON PEACE

*(Excerpt)*

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes that this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations, and expresses its readiness to take all the resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace

by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i.e., seizure and violence.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

8 November 1917

*Dekrety Sovietskoy vlasti*  
(Decrees of Soviet Power),  
Collection, Part I, 1957

RESOLUTION OF THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA  
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

**ON THE FORMATION OF A WORKER  
AND PEASANT GOVERNMENT**

*(Excerpt)*

To establish a provisional workers' and peasants' government, to be known as the Council of People's Commissars, to govern the country until the Constituent Assembly is convened. The management of individual branches of state activity is entrusted to commissions whose

members shall ensure the fulfilment of the programme announced by the Congress, and shall work in close contact with mass organisations of men and women workers, sailors, soldiers, peasants and office employees. Governmental authority is vested in a collegium of the chairmen of those commissions, i.e., the Council of People's Commissars.

Control over the activities of the People's Commissars with the right to replace them is vested in the All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies and its Central Executive Committee.

At the present time the Council of People's Commissars is constituted as follows:

Chairman of the Council—*Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin)*. . . .

8 November 1917

*Sobraniye uzakoneniye RSFSR*  
Collection of Statutes of the Russian  
Socialist Federal Soviet Republic), 1917,  
No. 1, Item 1

ADDRESS  
OF THE SECOND ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON THE TRANSFER OF POWER TO THE SOVIETS

All power henceforth shall belong to the Soviets. The Commissars of the former Provisional Government shall be removed. Chairmen of the Soviets shall communicate directly with the Revolutionary Government.

8 November 1917

*Sobraniye uzakoneniye RSFSR*, 1917,  
No. 1, Item 9

DECLARATION  
OF RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

The October Revolution of workers and peasants commenced under the overall banner of emancipation.

The peasants are emancipated from the power of the landowners because there is no longer any landlord ownership of land—it has been abolished. Soldiers and sailors are emancipated from the power of autocratic generals because henceforth generals shall be elected and removable. Workers are emancipated from the whims and tyranny of

the capitalists because henceforth workers' control shall be established over factories and mills. Everything that lives and is capable of life is emancipated from hated bondage.

There remain only the peoples of Russia, who have suffered and are suffering oppression and tyranny, whose emancipation must begin immediately, whose liberation must be carried out decisively and irreversibly.

During the tsarist epoch the peoples of Russia were systematically set against one another. The results of that policy are well known: butchery and pogroms, on the one hand, enslavement of peoples, on the other.

There can and must be no return to that shameful internecine policy. Henceforth it must be replaced by a policy of a voluntary and honourable union of the peoples of Russia.

During the imperialist period, after the February Revolution, when power shifted to the Constitutional-Democratic bourgeoisie, the naked policy of attrition gave way to a policy of cowardly lack of trust in the peoples of Russia, a policy of cavilling and provocation glossed over by declarations of "freedom" and "equality" of the peoples. The results of that policy are well known: intensification of national hostility and undermining of mutual trust.

An end must be put to that unworthy policy of lies and mistrust, cavilling and provocation. Henceforth it must be replaced by an open and honest policy leading to complete mutual trust among the peoples of Russia.

Only through such trust can a just and firm union of the peoples of Russia be established.

Only through such a union can the workers and peasants of the peoples of Russia be welded into a single revolutionary force capable of withstanding any offensive from the imperialist-annexationist bourgeoisie.

The Congress of Soviets this June proclaimed the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination.

The Second Congress of Soviets this October ratified that inalienable right of the peoples of Russia more decisively and specifically.

In executing the will of these congresses, the Council of People's Commissars has resolved to put the following principles at the basis of its activity on the issue of the nationalities of Russia:

- (1) Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
- (2) The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, up to secession and the formation of an independent state.
- (3) The revoking of all and every national and national-religious privilege and restriction.

(4) Free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups residing in the territory of Russia.

Specific decrees pertaining thereto are to be formulated immediately after the setting up of a commission on nationality affairs.

15 November 1917

*Sobraniye uzakoneniya RSFSR*, 1917,  
No. 2, Item 18

ADDRESS  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE RSFSR

**TO ALL WORKER MOSLEMS OF RUSSIA  
AND THE EAST**

Comrades and Brothers,

Great events are taking place in Russia. An end is fast approaching to the bloody war which was started in order to divide up other people's countries. The dominion of the plunderers who have enslaved the peoples of the world is crumbling. Under the blows of the Russian revolution the old edifice of bondage and servitude is cracking up. The world of tyranny and oppression is living through its final days. A new world is being born, a world of working people and liberated men and women. At the head of that revolution stands the worker and peasant government of Russia: the Council of People's Commissars.

The whole of Russia is studded with Revolutionary Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. Power in the country is in the hands of the people. The working people of Russia have one ardent desire—to attain an honourable peace and to help the downtrodden peoples of the world win their freedom.

Russia is not alone in this sacred cause. The mighty call of freedom coming from the Russian revolution is being taken up by all working people in East and West. The war-worn peoples of Europe are already reaching out to us, creating peace. The workers and soldiers of the West are already gathering under the banner of socialism, storming the bastions of imperialism. And faraway India, that very country which had for ages been oppressed by the "enlightened" plunderers of Europe, has already raised the banner of insurrection, organising its own Soviets of Deputies, casting off its hated servitude and appealing to the peoples of the East to fight and liberate themselves.

The kingdom of capitalist plunder and violence is crumbling. The soil is burning beneath the feet of the imperialist plunderers.

In the face of these great events we are appealing to you, poor and unfortunate Moslems of Russia and the East.

Moslems of Russia, Tatars along the Volga and in the Crimea, Kirghiz and Sarts of Siberia and Turkestan, Turks and Tatars of Transcaucasia, Chechens and mountaineers of the Caucasus, all of you whose mosques and prayer houses were destroyed, whose beliefs and customs were trampled underfoot by the tsars and tyrants of Russia!

Henceforth your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are proclaimed free and inviolate. Organise your national way of life freely and unhampered. You have the right to do so. Know that your rights, like the rights of all the peoples of Russia, are preserved by the entire might of the revolution and its bodies, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

So support this revolution and its plenipotentiary government.

Moslems of the East, Persians and Turks, Arabs and Indians, all those whose heads and property, freedom and homeland have for hundreds of years been haggled over by greedy plunderers of Europe, all those whose countries the predators who started the war wanted to divide up.

We declare that the secret treaties of the fallen Tsar concerning the seizure of Constantinople, ratified by the overthrown Kerensky, are now torn up and destroyed. The Russian Republic and its government, the Council of People's Commissars, are against the seizure of other people's lands: Constantinople must remain in the hands of Moslems.

We declare that the treaty on the partition of Persia is torn up and destroyed. As soon as war actions cease, troops will be withdrawn from Persia and Persians will be guaranteed the right freely to determine their own fate.

We declare that the treaty on the partition of Turkey and the annexation of Armenia from it is torn up and destroyed. As soon as war actions cease, the Armenians will be guaranteed the right freely to determine their own political destiny.

You need not expect enslavement from Russia and its revolutionary Government, but from the European imperialist plunderers, from those who have turned your homelands into their own "colonial" booty.

Overthrow then those plunderers and enslavers of your countries. Today, when war and ruin are shaking the old world to its foundations, when the whole world is aflame with hatred against the imperialist robbers, when any spark of fury can turn into a mighty flame of revolution, when even the Indian Moslems, exhausted and tor-

mented by foreign tyranny, are rising up against their enslavers—it is no time for silence. Waste no time and cast off the age-old plunderers of your lands! No longer let them pillage your own dear hearths! You yourselves should be masters of your lands! You yourselves should build your own lives in your own fashion and likeness. You have the right to do so, for your fate is in your own hands. . . .

Comrades and Brothers,

We are advancing firmly and resolutely towards a just and democratic peace.

Upon our banners we bear the liberation of the downtrodden peoples of the world.

Moslems of Russia,

Moslems of the East,

We expect sympathy and support from you upon this path of making a new world.

3 December 1917

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1917,  
No. 6

#### DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE

I. 1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

II. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies further resolves:

1. In effecting the socialisation of land, private ownership of land is hereby abolished; all land is proclaimed the property of the whole people and is handed over to the working masses without compensation on the basis of equitable division giving right of use only.

All forests, mineral wealth and waters of national importance, and all live-stock and appurtenances, model farms and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property.

2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council are hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the

power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.

4. For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society and organising the economy, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.

5. To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III. 1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Third Congress of Soviets whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving, by the working people, at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same end in view, the Third Congress of Soviets insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Third Congress of Soviets welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

The Third Congress of Soviets regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the Tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first blow struck at international banking, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

IV. The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies considers that now that the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploi-

ters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representative bodies—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Third Congress of Soviets confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

25 January 1918

*Sobraniye uzakoneniy RSFSR*, 1918,  
No. 15, Item 215

RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC**

(1) The Russian Socialist Soviet Republic is established on the basis of a voluntary union of peoples of Russia, as a federation of Soviet republics of these peoples.

(2) The supreme organ of power within the federation is the All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, to be convened no less than every three months.

(3) The All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies elects the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. In between congresses, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee is to be the supreme body.

(4) The Federation Government, i.e., the Council of People's Commissars, is elected and removed, in whole and in part, by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets or the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

(5) The method of participation by Soviet republics in the federal government, by regions with a particular way of life and national composition, just like the division of the spheres of activity of federal and regional institutions of the Russian Republic, are to be determined immediately, upon the formation of regional Soviet republics, by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the central executive committees of those republics.

(6) All local affairs are decided exclusively by local Soviets. The right of regulating relations and settling disputes between lower Soviets is accorded to the higher Soviets. Central Soviet power is obliged to check on observance of the fundamental principles of the federation and it represents the Russian Federation of Soviets in its entirety. Central power is also responsible for undertaking measures that are implementable only at state level, while at the same time not infringing upon the rights of individual regions that are part of the federation.

(7) The Central Executive Committee of Soviets is to be responsible for drawing up these fundamental provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federative Republic and presenting them to the next Congress of Soviets.

28 January 1918

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 1,  
1959, p. 30

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS**

**ON THE POLICY  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION**

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies welcomes and wholeheartedly approves the national policy of the Government of People's Commissars, aimed at implementing the principle of self-determination of peoples, understood in the spirit of self-determination of the working people of all nationalities of Russia. In particular, the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies ratifies the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Executive Committee on Finland and Armenia.

The Congress expresses its profound conviction that further steps taken by Soviet power in this direction will help to turn the former Russian empire, which had held peoples within its bounds by oppression and force, into a fraternal union of freely united Soviet republics of Russia on federal principles.

28 January 1918

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 1,  
1959, p. 31

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SEVENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

ON OPPRESSED NATIONS

(Excerpt)

...The Congress approves the policy of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars in unswervingly and completely abolishing throughout the Russian Republic all and every privilege, no matter what national group it applies to.

In expressing its sympathy with the working people of all border regions of the former Russian empire, who have now broken free as a result of war and revolution, the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets emphasises, too, its continuing solidarity backed up by common struggle against the age-old oppression of tsarism and the Russian nationalist bourgeoisie.

The Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets confirms that at the present time relations between the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Russian Republic are determined by a federal bond on the basis of the resolutions of the Central Executive Committee of the Ukraine of 18 May 1919 and of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of 1 June of the same year.

5 December 1919

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1919,  
No. 64, Item 580

ADDRESS  
OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
TO THE KARELIAN PEOPLE ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE FORMATION OF THE KARELIAN LABOUR COMMUNE

By its resolution of 8 June 1920, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, applying Article 11 of the RSFSR Constitution on self-determination of peoples, has decreed to form, for the purpose of stepping up the struggle to liberate the working people of Karelia, a regional union, the Karelian Labour Commune. By its resolution of 4 August 1920, the Council of People's Commissars and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee defined the borders of the Karelian Labour Commune.

In close unity with the working people of all nationalities inhabiting the RSFSR, the Karelian working people are entering a new period

in their history. The future destinies of the Karelian working people are in their own hands. Completely unlimited opportunities for their national development are opening up on the basis of self-determination of the working people.

The mighty federation of working peoples united within the Russian Soviet Republic stands on guard of the rights of the working people of Karelia, their national self-determination and their freedom from the tyranny of all and every oppressor and exploiter.

Having fought for many long centuries for their existence amidst their barren and inclement environment, the Karelian people are now embarking upon the road of extensive national development within the family of working peoples of various nationalities liberated from servitude and exploitation. Having managed to preserve their specific language and the remnants of their ancient folk traditions within their severe mode of life, the Karelian working people now have the chance to gain a new future for themselves as a self-determined free people through their peaceful labour and intelligent work. Their stubbornly-toiling ancestors left monuments to their savage life in the form of folk songs and legends, thereby creating for them a link with the unfortunate generations who had toiled amidst the same savage environment.

Over many centuries the Karelian working people vegetated under the onerous burden of the vicious tsarist regime, suffering barbaric tyranny from tsarist officers and all manner of agents and minions of tsarism.

The heroic revolutionary struggle of the Russian proletariat also brought the Karelian working people liberation from the tortuous yoke of tsarist tyranny. History, however, had prepared new torments for them, and White Guard bands, supported or organised by exploiting elements, local or neighbouring predators and blood-suckers, subjected the Karelian people to the bloody terrors of the White Guard incursion.

The whole burden of bloody repression under the rule of the barbaric White Guard bands entirely fell on the broad working masses of Karelia, whose sons took part in a heroic battle against the incursors and fell victim to their vicious repression, paving the way for a better future for their working-class brothers through their own deaths.

Shoulder to shoulder with the working people of the Soviet Republic, with the aid of its heroic Red Army and in alliance with the glorious sons of neighbour Finland, the Red Finnish communist detachments, the Karelian working people broke free from the terror of the White Guard bands and from the yoke of the predators and exploiters.

The Karelian working people, like other peoples of the Soviet Republic, finally obtained, in the form of their own worker-and-peasant Soviets, the weapon for their social liberation and their peaceful cultural and national development.

The Congress of Soviets of Karelia is now the supreme body of power of the Karelian Labour Commune; for the time being, the Karelian Revolutionary Committee is performing these functions. The Karelian Labour Commune, by resolution of the First All-Karelia Congress of Soviets, maintains close links with the working people of Russia and with the Russian Soviet Republic as a whole.

Yet as part of the Republic, distinguished from other parts by its national and economic peculiarities, the Karelian Labour Commune will have its own competent self-government bodies with extensive freedom of action. The limits of its competence are to be defined by agreement with the appropriate bodies of Soviet Republican power, on the principle of close unity and solidarity among the working people of different nationalities and the right of each of them to self-determination.

The Government of Soviet Russia happily welcomes the new-born Karelian Labour Commune, now part of the family of labouring Soviet republics; it is firmly convinced that the Karelian Commune will develop and flourish as a champion of working-class power at the distant north-western reaches of the Federative Soviet Republic. The Government of Soviet Russia gives the Commune its promise that it will support it in every possible way and safeguard it in its work, recognising the latter as an indivisible important stage in the great task of constructing a world Soviet system.

22 September 1920

*Izvestia*, 22 September 1920

Chapter II  
**FORMATION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS**

DECREE  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE RSFSR

**ON RECOGNITION BY THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE PEOPLE'S UKRAINIAN REPUBLIC  
AND ON AN ULTIMATUM  
TO THE CENTRAL RADA IN VIEW  
OF ITS COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY**

*(Excerpt)*

Guided by the interests of unity and fraternal union of the exploited working people's masses in the fight for socialism, guided by recognition of these principles by numerous resolutions of the bodies of revolutionary democracy—the Soviets, particularly the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets—the socialist Government of Russia, the Council of People's Commissars, once again confirms the right to self-determination of all nations which had been oppressed by tsarism and the Great Russian bourgeoisie, up to and including the right of those nations to secede from Russia. . . .

Therefore, we, the Council of People's Commissars, recognise the People's Ukrainian Republic, its right to secede from Russia or to enter into talks with the Russian Republic on federal and any other mutual relations.

All that concerns national rights and national independence of the Ukrainian people is recognised by us, the Council of People's Commissars, immediately, without restriction and conditions.

17 December 1917

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR, 1917,  
No. 6, Item 90*

MANIFESTO  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF SOVIETS OF THE UKRAINE

**TO ALL WORKERS,  
PEASANTS AND SOLDIERS OF THE UKRAINE**

*(Excerpt)*

The government that deceived the people, the government of Kerensky, has been brought down by the concerted offensive of workers, soldiers and peasants of all Russia. The All-Russia congresses of workers', soldiers' and peasants' deputies, in which the Ukrainian Soviets also took part, created a new power—the government of lower classes in the form of the Council of People's Commissars, being the Worker and Peasant Government of the Russian Federative Republic.

Only then could all the demands of the workers and poor peasants be met. Straightaway decrees were issued on transferring to the peasants all the land without redemption and together with all stock, without waiting for the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, on workers' control over production and on the eight-hour working day, and the Decree on Peace. Only popular power was capable of leading the country to a peace that was worthy of the revolutionary people, only it could establish in the army elective principles and make it altogether popular.

These actions of the Soviet Government met fervent support among the working people throughout the country, among all peoples who are part of the Russian Federative Republic. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are everywhere giving their backing to the Council of People's Commissars.

... The First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, which was convened by the South-Western Regional Committee of Soviets, was to be opened in Kiev on 3 December. Leaders of the bourgeois Central Rada, with the aid of direct force and deceit, prevented the Congress from getting down to work. Then the bulk of delegates of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, as well as part of the peasant delegates, moved to Kharkov, where they joined up with delegates of Soviets of the Donets and Krivoi Rog basins and completed their work.

In order radically to put a stop to the criminal policy of the Ukrainian Central Rada which had had the gall to act on behalf of the working people of the Ukraine, the Congress of Soviets considered it necessary to take over all state power in the Ukrainian People's Republic. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers',

Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, elected at the Congress, was instructed to establish a new power—the power of workers and peasants. By decree of the Congress, the Central Rada was deprived of the rights it had abrogated for itself; at the same time, the General Secretariat of the Ukrainian Central Rada forfeits its powers. Henceforth, the People's Secretariat, appointed by the Central Executive Committee of the All-Ukraine Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, shall be the government of the Ukraine.

25 December 1917.

*Kommunisticheskaya partiya—vdokhnovitel i organizator obyedinitel'nogo dvizheniya ukrainskogo naroda za obrazovaniye SSSR* (The Communist Party—Inspirator and Organiser of the Unity Movement of the Ukrainian People for the Formation of the USSR), Collection of Documents and Materials, Kiev, 1962, p. 36

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON ORGANISING SOVIET POWER IN THE UKRAINE

*(Excerpt)*

The All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets *resolves*:

Power on the territory of the Ukrainian Republic hereafter shall belong exclusively to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies; locally—to the uyezd, city, gubernia and regional Soviets, and centrally—to the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, its Central Executive Committee and those bodies which it may set up.

The Ukraine is proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

The Provisional Central Executive Committee of the Ukraine is instructed immediately to disseminate throughout the Ukrainian Republic all decrees and orders of the Worker-Peasant Government of the Federation, which are common for the whole federation—on land, workers' control over production and on the complete democratisation of the army; to declare invalid all orders of the Rada which it had issued and is yet to issue, and to revoke all the earlier orders of the Rada and the General Secretariat that had been against the interests of the workers and poor peasants of the Ukraine.

It is to establish between the Worker-Peasant Government of the Russian Federation, as well as governments of other parts of Russia, and the Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine complete accord in aims and actions necessary in the interests of the workers and peasants of all peoples of the Russian Federation, guided by the principle that these relations can only be correct and normal when the governments of all parts of Russia are power bodies of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

It is to call a Second All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies in the nearest future for further extending and deepening worker-peasant power in the Ukraine.

12 December 1917

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 15

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

ON SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE UKRAINE

(*Excerpt*)

The principle of the right of nations to self-determination, proclaimed by the February Revolution, could only be implemented by the October Revolution which has paved the way for the establishment of the Worker-Peasant Government—the Council of People's Commissars.

Therefore, the First All-Ukraine Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, recognising the Ukrainian Republic as a federal part of the Russian Republic, declares an implacable struggle against the policy of the Central Rada which is fatal for the workers and peasants, and is intent upon exposing its bourgeois, counter-revolutionary nature.

The Congress is to fight for self-determination of the Ukraine in the interests of the workers and peasants, for their supremacy, for removing all national restrictions, all national enmity and hatred, for a Ukrainian Worker-Peasant Republic based on close solidarity between the working people of the Ukraine, irrespective of their national affiliation, and the working people of all Russia.

12 December 1917

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 16

MANIFESTO  
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ESTLAND LABOUR  
COMMUNE

*(Excerpt)*

The Government of the Estland Labour Commune declares the Estonian Provisional Government overthrown and proclaims the re-establishment of Soviet power of the working people of Estonia.

29 November 1918

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 193

DECREE  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE RSFSR

**ON RECOGNISING THE INDEPENDENCE  
OF THE ESTLAND SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

In response to the enquiry of the Estland Soviet Government, the Council of People's Commissars declares:

(1) The Russian Soviet Government recognises the independence of the Estland Soviet Republic. The Russian Soviet Government recognises the power of the Soviets of Estland as the supreme power of Estland, it recognises the power of the Council of People's Commissars of Estland until the Congress of those Soviets. . . .

(2) The Russian Soviet Government imposes the obligation upon all military and civil authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic that have dealings with Estland to render the Estland Soviet Government and its armed forces every assistance in the fight to liberate Estland from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

(3) The People's Finance Commissariat is instructed to release ten million roubles as a loan to the People's Bank of the Estland Soviet Republic.

(4) The People's Food Commissariat and the Supreme Economic Council are instructed to make an accord with appropriate bodies of the Estland Soviet Republic on the subject of establishing trade between both republics.

7 December 1918

*Izvestia Vserossiyskogo Tsentralnogo Ispolnitelnogo Komiteta* (News Bulletin of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee), 8 December 1918, No. 269

DECREE  
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ESTLAND LABOUR COMMUNE

**ON THE FULL POWERS OF THE SOVIET  
OF THE ESTLAND LABOUR COMMUNE**

*(Excerpt)*

On 29 November 1918, Estonia was proclaimed an independent Soviet republic. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic recognised that independence. The Soviet of the Estland Labour Commune confirms once more that it is to take the strictest revolutionary measures against those who oppose the rights of the Estonian proletariat, who do not submit to the Soviet of the Estland Labour Commune as the supreme power of the Estonian Soviet Republic.

All private individuals and institutions on the territory of the Estonian Soviet Republic are obliged to carry out only those resolutions which are issued by the Soviet of the Estland Labour Commune or by local Soviet institutions within the scope of their powers or ratified by representatives thus empowered.

16 December 1918

*Syedyy Sovietov v dokumentakh, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 198*

MANIFESTO  
OF THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY  
WORKER-PEASANT GOVERNMENT OF LITHUANIA  
**ON ESTABLISHING SOVIET POWER IN LITHUANIA**

*(Excerpt)*

In the name of the insurgent workers and poorest peasants of Lithuania, in the name of the Red Armymen of Lithuania, we proclaim as overthrown the power of German military occupation, of the Lithuanian Tariba and all other bourgeois national councils and committees.

All power is now in the hands of the Soviets of Workers', Landless and Land-Starved Peasants' Deputies of Lithuania.

Workers, Landless and Land-Starved Peasants of Lithuania,

The hour of liberation has struck from the insufferable tyranny of the occupying forces, of humiliation and poverty. The hour of your liberation has struck from the age-old tyranny of the landowners, rich farmers and capitalists who made enormous wealth out of the people's misfortune during the terrible slaughter that we have just lived through.

Resting on the will of the workers, poor peasants and Red Army-

men of Lithuania who have risen up against the occupational powers and their agent—the counter-revolutionary Tariba, and repulsing any attempts at counter-revolutionary interference in the destinies of the working people of Lithuania by Anglo-French-American capitalists, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania and Byelorussia has proclaimed a Provisional Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government of Lithuania.

In the name of the revolutionary working people of Lithuania, we declare:

... (3) All power shall be transferred to the Soviets of Workers', Landless and Land-Starved Peasants' Deputies of Lithuania.

(4) There shall be no restrictions on the rights of nationalities. All nationalities of Lithuania shall be equal in rights. Each nation shall have the right to use its native language in state and public institutions.

... (8) All land of the landowners and kulaks, of the churches, monasteries and clergy, with its live-stock and appurtenances, as well as all the forests, waters and minerals shall belong to all the working people of Lithuania (nationalised) and shall be transferred for administrative purposes to the Soviets of Workers' and Land-Starved Peasants' Deputies.

(9) All railways, postal institutions, telegraph and telephone networks, mills, factories, banks and wholesale warehouses are declared the property of the entire working people of Lithuania (nationalised) and must be handed over to organs of Soviet power by their former holders, owners and proprietors in complete order, in line with the set instructions of the revolutionary workers' power.

(10) It is most strictly forbidden to export from Lithuania and to make unfit any live-stock or appurtenances, as well as any rolling stock and equipment of the railways, postal-telegraph and power stations and other property belonging to the whole people.

(11) Local Soviets are obliged to safeguard people's property from plunder and to subject offenders to the most severe punishment.

(12) Wages are steadily to be raised to the standards prevailing in Soviet Russia.

(13) The eight-hour working day is to be introduced in industry, trade and agriculture.

(14) All debt obligations of the workers and rural poor to capitalists, landowners, kulaks and clergy are to be regarded as null and void.

(15) Resolute measures are to be taken to rehabilitate the economy of the country (arranging transport and so on), and to establish trade between Lithuania and Soviet Russia, Germany and other neighbouring countries.

(16) Resolute and merciless measures are to be taken to fight high prices and profiteering, particularly on the essentials.

In building our new life on the same principles as are fundamental to the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, we shall continue to move hand in hand with Soviet Russia and all other countries that have taken the path of world socialist revolution.

16 December 1918

*Krasny arkhiv*, 1940, No. 5

MANIFESTO OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT  
OF WORKERS, LANDLESS PEASANTS AND RIFLEMEN  
OF LATVIA

ON ESTABLISHING SOVIET POWER IN LATVIA

*(Excerpt)*

In the name of world revolution that unites and liberates the proletarians of the world, we, the undersigned, declare that from this day on all state power in Latvia shall again be in the hands of the Soviet Government.

This government of Soviets of Workers', Landless Peasants' and Riflemen's Deputies of Latvia, residing permanently in the city of Riga, hereby declares:

(1) All bourgeois governments of Latvia are overthrown and all power, both centrally and locally, shall be transferred to the Soviets of Workers', Landless Peasants' and Riflemen's Deputies on the basis of resolutions of the Second Congress of Soviets held in Volmar.

(2) The armed working people shall overthrow all previous governmental institutions and destroy on the spot any member or defender of the said institutions who shall not surrender voluntarily or shall not renounce his role.

(3) The right to private ownership of land and farm-stock shall be revoked and all landlord, government and church lands with their stock shall be transferred to the Soviets in the first place without redemption.

(4) The right to private ownership of the remaining means of production, as of trading enterprises, means of communication, banks, etc., must be, step by step, revoked; to these ends all of them shall immediately be subject to strict workers' control.

(5) It shall be forbidden to estrange in any way one's right to property or other rights to houses in the towns.

(6) Immediately the eight-hour working day shall be introduced, without overtime hours for all workers, and all decrees of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic on providing for the working class shall come into force.

(7) A merciless campaign shall be declared against profiteering, and all existing food supplies shall be transferred to the disposal and distribution of Soviet institutions; at the same time, there shall be immediate organisation of delivery of products in short supply.

(8) The restoration of economic enterprises that have been destroyed and evacuated must start immediately, as well as the organisation of work needed for a communist Latvia.

We fully appreciate that the transition to socialism is not a matter of a single day, but we are resolutely embarking on the road to socialism. Upon the ruins of a Latvia impoverished by imperialism, we shall begin straightaway to build a new socialist palace of labour. Weapons in hand, we shall fight against our foreign Social-traitors who both here in Latvia and even in Germany find nothing to socialise, and who therefore are calling upon the proletariat to assist the bourgeoisie in building a new fortress of capitalism.

We realise that we are not alone on this difficult road and in this hard battle. Behind us stands the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, with which we shall continue to be closely allied by more than external bonds. And behind us stands the communist revolution which both in Germany and elsewhere in Europe will lead in the very near future to a world Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, an integral part of which we too shall be.

We decisively reject any interference in favour of our feudal-bourgeois enemies, even if we are threatened with this interference by a government that calls itself "socialist"; but we shall call for help and expect it from the truly revolutionary proletariat of the whole world, in particular of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

17 December 1918

*Zhizn natsionalnostei*, 22 December 1918

DECREE  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE RSFSR

**ON RECOGNISING THE INDEPENDENCE  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

In response to the enquiry from the Lithuanian Soviet Government, the Council of People's Commissars declares:

(1) The Russian Soviet Government recognises the independence of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. The Russian Soviet Government recognises the power of the Soviets of Lithuania as the supreme power of Lithuania; it recognises the power of the Provisional Revolutionary Workers' Government of Lithuania until the Congress of those Soviets. . . .

(2) The Russian Soviet Government imposes an obligation on all military and civil authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic that have dealings with Lithuania to render the Lithuanian Soviet Government and its armed forces every assistance in the fight to liberate Lithuania from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

(3) The People's Food Commissariat and the Supreme Economic Council are instructed to make an accord with appropriate bodies of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic on the subject of establishing trade between both republics.

22 December 1918

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1918,  
No. 98, Item 1006

DECREE  
OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE RSFSR

**ON RECOGNISING THE INDEPENDENCE  
OF THE SOVIET REPUBLIC OF LATVIA**

In response to the enquiry of the Soviet Government of Latvia, the Council of People's Commissars declares:

(1) The Russian Soviet Government recognises the independence of the Soviet Republic of Latvia. The Russian Soviet Government recognises the power of the Soviets of Latvia as the supreme power of Latvia; until the Congress of those Soviets, it recognises the power of the Government of Workers, Landless Peasants and Riflemen of Latvia, headed by Comrade Stuchka.

(2) The Russian Soviet Government imposes an obligation on all military and civil authorities of the Russian Soviet Republic that have dealings with Latvia to render every assistance to the Soviet Government of Latvia and its armed forces in the fight to liberate Latvia from the yoke of the bourgeoisie.

(3) The People's Food Commissariat and the Supreme Economic Council are instructed to make an accord with appropriate bodies of the Soviet Republic of Latvia on the subject of establishing trade between both republics.

22 December 1918

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1918,  
No. 98, Item 1005

RESOLUTION  
OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ON RECOGNISING THE SOVIET REPUBLICS  
OF ESTLAND, LITHUANIA AND LATVIA

The Central Executive Committee, having heard the report of the People's Commissar for Nationalities Affairs, welcomes the peoples of Estland, Lithuania, Latvia and the Ukraine on their continuing liberation from the yoke of foreign conquest.

Guided by the principle of complete and effective self-determination of the working people of oppressed nationalities, which the imperialists of all countries scorn, the Central Executive Committee ratifies the resolution of the Council of People's Commissars on recognising the Soviet Republics of Estland, Latvia and Lithuania by the [Russian] Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Faced with the Soviet Republics of Estland, Latvia and Lithuania, set up by revolutionary struggle of the proletarian and peasant masses, the Central Executive Committee again confirms that the fact of these countries previously adhering to the old tsarist empire shall not impose upon them any obligations, and at the same time the Central Executive Committee expresses its firm conviction that only now, on the grounds of recognition of complete freedom of self-determination and transfer of power to the working class, a free, voluntary and unbreakable union of working people of all nations inhabiting the former Russian empire can come into existence.

The Central Executive Committee testifies to the readiness of the RSFSR to render all necessary assistance and support to the working classes of Estland, Latvia, Lithuania and the Ukraine in their fight

against the system of exploitation and oppression and in defence of their freedom and independence from the attempts at foreign conquest.

25 December 1918

*Krasny arkhiv*, 1940, No. 6

MANIFESTO  
OF THE PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY  
WORKER-PEASANT SOVIET GOVERNMENT  
OF BYELORUSSIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE FORMATION  
OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

Together with the working peoples of Russia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, and Latvia, from this day forward you too are free and equal masters of a free and independent Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic. From this day forward Byelorussia—a Soviet Republic—shall be a republic of the working people, of workers, poor peasants and Red Armymen of Byelorussia.

In the name of Byelorussia which has for ages been suffering captivity, servitude and humiliation, and henceforth a free Soviet Byelorussian Republic, in the name of the Red Army, in the name of the social Revolution and world socialism, we, the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Byelorussian Soviet independent Republic, installed in our posts by decision of the last Conference of the Communist Party and by will of the Soviets of Byelorussia, proclaim to the whole world:

(1) Henceforth all power in Byelorussia shall belong only to the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Farm Labourers' and Red Army Deputies.

(2) Any power of German, Polish and Ukrainian occupying forces that still remains, wherever it might be, shall be henceforth abolished.

(3) The venal bourgeois Byelorussian Rada and its so-called "popular ministers" are henceforth proscribed.

(4) All laws, treaties, resolutions, edicts and instructions both of the Rada and its servants, and of the German, Polish and Ukrainian occupying forces, are declared invalid; the orders and instructions of the German authorities concerning the procedure for evacuating German soldiers from Byelorussia shall remain in force.

(5) Henceforth a revolutionary regime shall be established in Byelorussia; all counter-revolutionary actions, as well as attempts to organise pogroms, plunder and violence shall be mercilessly punished with the whole severity of revolutionary laws.

(6) Workers, peasants and any working people of all nationalities who live in Byelorussia shall enjoy equal rights and come under the protection of revolutionary laws.

(7) All the land of landowners and big landlords, of monasteries, Orthodox and Catholic churches and of the clergy generally, with all their live-stock and appurtenances, as well as all the forests, waters and minerals of the earth shall become the property of the working people of Byelorussia.

(8) All the railways, means of communication, postal, telegraph and telephone network, the mills, factories and banks shall be declared the property of the workers and poor peasants of Byelorussia.

(9) Local Soviets shall be obliged to safeguard public property from plunder and damage, calling to account those guilty of offences.

(10) An eight-hour working day shall be established, without overtime, and, at the same time, all the decrees of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic in protecting the working class shall come into force.

We, the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Byelorussian Soviet independent Republic, entrust defence of all these great gains of the social revolution to the Red Army, the workers and poor peasants of Byelorussia. It reminds all working people that, in defending Soviet Byelorussia, they are defending Soviet Russia, defending world revolution, the interests of the working people and the triumph of world socialism.

1 January 1919

*Zhizn natsionalnostei*, 5 January 1919

DECLARATION  
OF THE PROVISIONAL  
WORKER-PEASANT GOVERNMENT OF THE UKRAINE

*(Excerpt)*

Born by the revolution, the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine regards it as its prime duty to bring the socialist revolution to an end, establishing everywhere the power of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies. Bearing in mind the conditions of modern warfare and the experience of civil war both in the Ukraine and in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine will continue with even more vigour to form a regular Red Ukrainian Army. This army will unite the insurgent detachments which have heroically and successfully fulfilled their revolutionary duties up to now, but which need

welding together, organisation and command unification in order to carry out further duties of revolutionary struggle.

While considering that the cause of liberating the working people must become the cause of all working people, the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine will resort, if need be, to the general arming of workers and peasants, declaring universal conscription.

...Facing the fact that we are still at the start of organising a communist society and that the interests of the working class have to be fully safeguarded even at this transitional stage of development, the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine considers it one of its first tasks to set up all-embracing legislation for protecting labour and organising all forms of the workers' insurance against sickness, old age and disability, and against unemployment. It is using the rich experience and legislation of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and extending throughout the Ukraine all the measures in this sphere adopted in Russia. . . .

...Close fraternal and continuous contacts with established Soviet authorities in other countries and the insurgent proletariat in places where it has not yet seized power, and with communist parties throughout the world, are a guarantee of the triumph and consolidation of Soviet power in the Ukraine. As first priority we declare loudly our solidarity with the Soviet Russian Federative Republic, the cradle of world revolution, the moral and material support of the world proletarian insurrection. The close historical, economic and cultural bond between the worker-and-peasant Ukraine and Soviet Russia imposes upon us the duty to even out our revolutionary class front, primarily with the front of the Russian proletariat. We proclaim all foes of Soviet Russia the foes of the Soviet Ukraine. We pursue identical political, economic and military objectives. The fight against the White Guards, the fight against the imperialist allies and the fight against the Ukrainian bourgeoisie in the form of the Directory is, similarly, a necessary condition for strengthening Soviet power both in Russia and in the Ukraine. The complete rout of the Russian bourgeoisie and Russian landowners is a condition not only of strengthening Soviet power in Russia but in the Ukraine as well.

All this predetermines unification of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic with Soviet Russia on the basis of a socialist federation whose forms are to be established by plenipotentiary representatives at the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets.

26 January 1919

*Sobraniye zakonenyi Ukrainy* (Collection of Statutes of the Ukraine), 1919, No. 4, Item 46

DECLARATION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-BYELORUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON UNITING THE SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
OF LITHUANIA AND BYELORUSSIA**

The workers and peasants of Byelorussia and Lithuania, linked by historic community of economic interests, were closely linked politically when in battle for the triumph of Soviet power in Byelorussia and Lithuania they combined their efforts and set up a single leading communist organisation. However, like the workers and poor peasants, the Byelorussian and Lithuanian bourgeoisie, in striving to preserve their wealth, have also banded together in a single body for suppressing the proletarian revolution and defeating the working people. The Lithuanian Tariba and the Byelorussian Rada, pressed from all sides by the insurgent working people, are opposing the workers and peasants of Byelorussia and Lithuania with a single counter-revolutionary front. Realising the need swiftly to defeat the White-Guard Byelorussian-Lithuanian government and considering the community of their economic interests, the All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, in full accord with the intentions and proposals of the Lithuanian Soviet Government, resolves:

To recognise the need for an immediate union of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic and the Lithuanian Soviet Republic, entrusting the implementation of the union and organisation of a single government to the organ of power chosen by the Congress.

2 February 1919

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 233

RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**ON RECOGNISING THE INDEPENDENCE  
OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

The Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee greets the working people of Byelorussia, whose liberation from the occupation by the armed forces of the imperialist invaders is virtually over.

Guided by the principle of full and effective self-determination of the working people of all countries, the Presidium of the All-Russia

Central Executive Committee recognises the independence of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic.

The Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee reaffirms that the fact of Byelorussia having been part of the old tsarist empire . . . does not impose upon it any obligations; it expresses meanwhile the firm conviction that only now, on the grounds of recognition of full freedom of self-determination and the transfer of power to the working class, a voluntary and indestructible union of working people of all nations inhabiting the former Russian empire can be set up.

The Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee welcomes the forthcoming unification of the working people of Byelorussia and the working people of Lithuania, closely linked by their past and their present economic conditions.

The Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee declares the readiness of the RSFSR to render every assistance and support to the working people of Byelorussia in their fight against the domination of exploitation and oppression and in defence of their freedom and independence from attempts at foreign conquest.

4 February 1919

*Sobraniye uzakoneniye RSFSR*, 1919,  
No. 3, Item 31

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS',  
LANDLESS AND LAND-STARVED PEASANTS'  
AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES OF LITHUANIA  
  
ON THE UNIFICATION OF LITHUANIA  
AND BYELORUSSIA

*(Excerpt)*

The Congress greets the fraternal Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia and with profound satisfaction notes that the aspiration for unifying Lithuania and Byelorussia into a single Republic is just as close and desirable to the working people of Lithuania as it is to the working people of Byelorussia. Therefore, in view of the already adopted decision by the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies of Byelorussia on merging Lithuania and Byelorussia into a single Republic, the Congress solemnly *proclaims the creation of a single Socialist Soviet Republic of Lithuania and Byelorussia* and instructs its elected Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Landless and Land-Starved Peasants' and Red Army Deputies of

Lithuania to merge with the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies of Byelorussia and to elect a Worker-Peasant Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Lithuania and Byelorussia.

Being fully aware of its indissoluble bond with all Soviet Socialist Republics, the Congress sees in the merger of Soviet Lithuania and Soviet Byelorussia only the first step along the road to unification of all Socialist Republics into a single state organism and it instructs the Worker-Peasant Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Lithuania and Byelorussia immediately to start talks with the Worker-Peasant Governments of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, Latvia, the Ukraine and Estland on the subject of setting up a single Federal Socialist Soviet Republic from all those republics.

The Congress proposes that all peoples and their governments recognise the Soviet Republic of Lithuania and Byelorussia and enter into direct relations with it.

18-20 February 1919

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 221

ADDRESS  
OF THE MILITARY-REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SOVIET INDEPENDENT  
REPUBLIC TO SOVIET RUSSIA

To All, All, All,

LENIN, MOSCOW

The Provisional Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Azerbaijan Soviet independent Republic, put in power at the wish of the revolutionary proletariat of Baku and the labouring peasants of Azerbaijan, proclaiming the old Mussavat government traitors of the people and enemies of their country's independence, is breaking off all relations with the Entente and other foes of Soviet Russia.

Being unable to withstand the combined bands of foreign and internal counter-revolution drawing on its own resources, the Military-Revolutionary Committee proposes to the Government of the Russian Soviet Republic to enter into a fraternal union for combined struggle against world imperialism. We ask you immediately to render effective assistance by sending Red Army detachments.

28 April 1920

*Izvestia VTsIK*, 29 April 1920, No. 91

ADDRESS  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE  
TO THE POPULATION OF AZERBAIJAN WITH  
AN APPEAL TO CONCLUDE A FRATERNAL UNION WITH SOVIET  
RUSSIA AND PROVIDE RED ARMY HELP

*(Excerpt)*

The Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan is now proceeding to direct fulfilment of the great duties imposed upon it by the trust of the Azerbaijan working people.

In the name of the Azerbaijan Soviet Republic, the Revolutionary Committee proposes a close, fraternal union with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic based on mutual trust and recognition. A lasting guarantee of victory for the workers' revolution in the Caucasus and the East lies in combining forces and mutual support between the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia and Soviet Azerbaijan.

The Revolutionary Committee urges the glorious Red Army of Soviet Russia to provide assistance to the workers and peasants of Azerbaijan in their fight against the combined forces of the Mussavat, Denikin, Dashnak and Georgian Menshevik counter-revolution. . .

Long live the Azerbaijan independent Soviet Republic!

Long live the revolutionary union of workers and peasants of Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Russia!

29 April 1920

*Borba za pobedu Sovjetskoy vlasti v Azerbajijane* (The Struggle for the Victory of Soviet Power in Azerbaijan), Collection of documents and materials, Baku, 1967, p. 475

DECLARATION  
OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OF ARMENIA

**ON PROCLAIMING ARMENIA  
A SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

By wish of the insurgent working people of Armenia headed by the Communist Party, we proclaim Armenia a Socialist Soviet Republic. Henceforth the Red Banner of Soviet Armenia is destined to defend its working people from the age-old yoke of the oppressors. . . .

The red banner of the free Soviet Republic of Armenia shall ex-

tract its working people from the abyss of misery and despair. From the initial strains of the victorious *Internationale* will forever disappear the spectre of an Armenia torn apart by tribal and national disension, and there will exist a brotherhood of peoples in their everyday working lives. The peasants of Soviet Armenia shall receive for their own working use all the land belonging to the beks, khans and meliks, as well as to the monasteries, churches and mosques. The people will be granted all the forests, minerals, rivers and lakes for satisfying the needs of the whole working population of Armenia. To this end we shall proclaim as property of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia all the reasonably large mills and factories, while their creators—the workers—shall become masters of free labour. The railways of Armenia, halted by lack of oil, shall again operate with the aid of Azerbaijan Soviet oil and shall again enliven communications over the entire territory of liberated Armenia.

Soviet Russia is to grant us fraternal aid through doing what it can to supply us with bread, cloth, and so on. The working intellectuals shall enjoy full opportunities to use their experience and intellectual power in the cause of Soviet construction. We shall immediately annul all state debts of Armenia to the Entente (particularly to America) which the Dashnak government imagined it would squeeze out of the sweat and blood of the workers and peasants of Armenia.

The Revolutionary Committee of Soviet Armenia has guarantees of effective sympathy from fraternal Soviet Azerbaijan and firmly believes that by establishing Soviet power in Armenia we shall forever rid ourselves of the disputes that have cost so much blood to the workers and peasants of both countries. In this conviction we send our revolutionary greetings to the working people of Azerbaijan, to the Baku proletariat as the heroic vanguard of socialist revolution in Transcaucasia, and to the fraternal Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee.

The Revolutionary Committee of Armenia is fully confident that it has the sympathy of the working peasants of Turkey, destined to play a big part in revolutionising the East. We believe in a workers' Turkey freeing itself from imperialist oppression and finding sympathy from us for its fight against the Sevres Treaty; now it is extending a fraternal hand to us after we have overthrown our common enemy and together joined the struggle against the Entente predators. We are also sure that peace between Soviet Armenia and labouring Turkey will not be dictated by the victor's sword, but by a fraternal agreement of free peoples of Soviet Armenia and revolutionary Turkey.

In taking upon ourselves the whole responsibility and burden of power in this unprecedentedly serious hour for our country, we call

upon the popular forces of Armenia to support us in the fight against the foes of Worker-Peasant power and to give of their unfailing creative Soviet endeavour.

29 November 1920

*Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR*,  
(USSR Foreign Policy Documents), Col-  
lection, 1959, Vol. 3, p. 346

ADDRESS  
OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE  
OF ARMENIA

**ON PROCLAIMING ARMENIA A SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia, following the adamant desire of the insurgent working people of Armenia, has nominated us to form the Revolutionary Committee, having proclaimed Armenia a Socialist Soviet Republic.

Soldiers, workers, peasants and all honest citizens of Armenia,

Soviet Armenia guarantees you a peaceful working life and will lay a strong foundation of fraternal unity with our neighbours. By joining the great family of Soviet republics of labour, ravaged Armenia will succeed in healing its deep wounds, a heavy legacy from the accursed old government.

30 November 1920

*Velikaya Oktyabrskaya sotsialisticheskaya revoliutsiya i pobeda Sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii* (The Great October Socialist Revolution and the Victory of Soviet Power in Armenia), Collection of Documents, 1957, p. 430

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE SOCIALIST  
SOVIET REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

ON RECOGNISING  
THE INDEPENDENCE OF ARMENIA,  
CONCLUDED IN ERIVAN

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* Armenia is proclaimed an independent Socialist Republic.

*Article 2.* Until the convocation of the Congress of Soviets of Armenia, a Provisional Military Revolutionary Committee shall be formed, to which shall pass absolute power in Armenia.

*Article 3.* The Russian Soviet Government shall recognise irrefutably all that becomes part of the territory of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia: Erivan Gubernia ... part of Kars Region ... Zangezur Uyezd ... part of Kazakh Uyezd ... and those parts of Tiflis Gubernia which were in the possession of Armenia up to 23 October 1920.

*Article 7.* The Russian Soviet Government shall take measures for an immediate concentration of military forces necessary for safeguarding the independence of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia.

*Article 8.* Upon signing the present agreement, the Government of the Republic of Armenia shall step down from power, and power shall provisionally go to a military command until the arrival of the Revolutionary Committee. . . .

2 December 1920

*Velikaya Oktyabrskaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda Sovietskoy vlasti v Armenii*, p. 441

PROCLAMATION  
OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OF GEORGIA  
ON OVERTHROWING THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY  
MENSHEVIK GOVERNMENT

*(Excerpt)*

Working people everywhere are taking to arms. A Revolutionary Committee of Georgia was formed in the town of Shulavery on 16 February 1921 to head the insurrection and carry out the will of the insurgents; taking in its hands full state power, it proclaims the government of the Georgian Mensheviks . . . overthrown. Georgia henceforth shall be a Socialist Soviet Republic.

Henceforth all power shall belong to the working people—workers and peasants. . . .

Long live the new-born Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia arisen from the flames and smoke of popular insurrection!

18 February 1921

*Revolutsionniye komitety Gruzii* (Revolutionary Committees of Georgia), Collection of Documents and Materials, 1963, p. 7

ALLIED TREATY  
ON FORMING THE FEDERAL UNION  
OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS  
OF TRANSCAUCASIA

**Adopted by the Plenipotentiary Conference  
of Central Executive Committees of the Transcaucasian  
Republics**

The Plenipotentiary Conference of Representatives of the Socialist Soviet Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, basing itself on the right, proclaimed by the great proletarian revolution, of peoples to self-determination, recognising the independence and sovereignty of each of the contracting parties, and appreciating the need to combine forces for the purpose of defence and in the interests of economic construction, has resolved that henceforth the Socialist Soviet Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia are to enter into a close military, political and economic union on the following terms:

(1) The Plenipotentiary Conference of Representatives, elected in an equal number by the governments of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, shall be the supreme power of the union.

(2) The Union Council, whose members shall be elected and recalled by the Conference, shall be the Executive Body of the Plenipotentiary Conference.

(3) The Union Council shall be responsible for military affairs, finance, foreign policy, foreign trade, communications, national inter-communication, combating counter-revolution and guiding economic policy within the republics party to the Treaty.

(4) The Union Council shall consist of a Chairman and his Deputy and the following Members:

- (a) People's Commissar for Military Affairs;
- (b) People's Commissar for Finance;
- (c) People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs;
- (d) People's Commissar for Post and Telegraph;
- (e) People's Commissar for Foreign Trade;
- (f) Chief of Railways;
- (g) Chairman of the Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counter-revolution.

*Note 1.* The corresponding people's commissariats of the republics party to the Treaty shall be disbanded, with the exception of the extraordinary commission for combating counter-revolution, which are to remain in the republics, subordinate to the Union Extraordinary Commission.

*Note 2.* The people's commissars for military affairs, finance, posts and telegraph shall have their plenipotentiaries within the republics party to the Treaty, who shall be members of the governments of those republics.

(5) The Union Council shall issue decrees, orders and instructions on all issues within its competence, and generally take all measures necessary for implementing the tasks assigned to it.

(6) A Supreme Economic Council shall be formed to coordinate the activity of all economic bodies within the republics party to the Treaty; it is to operate as a standing committee of the Union Council.

(7) The Supreme Economic Council shall comprise a Chairman—Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the Union Council, and the following Members: People's Commissars for the Navy and for Finance, representatives of the Economic Councils of the republics party to the Treaty, a representative of the Transcaucasian Trade Union Council and a representative of the Union Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

(8) The Supreme Economic Council shall establish a single economic plan for the union of the republics, submit it for ratification to the Union Council, guide the work of the economic commissariats according to that plan, observe its implementation and establish, if need be, exceptions to that plan.

(9) The resolutions of the Supreme Economic Council shall be utterly binding on all union departments and institutions, as well as on the economic councils of the republics party to the Treaty.

(10) In the event of Supreme Economic Council resolutions affecting uncoordinated departments and institutions, the Supreme Economic Council shall effect them through the economic councils of the appropriate republics.

(11) A Union Workers' and Peasants' Inspection shall be organised at the Union Council for guiding and coordinating the work of republican people's commissariats of Workers' and Peasants' Inspections on issues of union competence, as well as for checking on the activity of union bodies.

(12) The Union Council and bodies subordinate to it shall be accountable in all their actions to the Plenipotentiary Conference of Representatives within the Union. The Plenipotentiary Conference has the right to halt or revoke any resolution or decision of the Union Council, the Supreme Economic Council and other union bodies both on the protest of republican governments and of its own volition.

(13) The Union of republics shall establish relations with the RSFSR on the basis of a Union Treaty.

12 March 1922

*Zhizn natsionalnoitei*, 14 April 1922

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-BUKHARA KURULTAI  
OF PEOPLE'S REPRESENTATIVES

**ON PROCLAIMING BUKHARA A PEOPLE'S  
SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

Bukhara is proclaimed a People's Soviet Republic in which power shall belong to the workers and peasants, comprising the bulk of the country's population, and shall be run by local and central Soviets elected by open voting.

8 October 1920

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 560

Chapter III  
**THE EARLY CONSTITUTIONS  
OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS  
UNITED IN THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC**

The Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People, approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets in January 1918, together with the Constitution of the Soviet Republic, approved by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, form the single fundamental law of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

This fundamental law comes into force from the moment of its publication in final form in *Izvestia Vserossiyskogo Tsentralnogo Ispolnitelnogo Komiteta Sovietov*. It shall be published by all the local bodies of Soviet power and prominently displayed in all Soviet establishments.

The Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets charges the People's Commissariat for Education to introduce the study of the fundamental propositions of the present Constitution, and also their explanation and interpretation, in all schools and educational establishments of the Russian Republic without exception.

**Section One**

**DECLARATION OF RIGHTS  
OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE**

*Chapter 1*

1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

### *Chapter 2*

3. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Third All-Russia Congress of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies further resolves:

(a) In effecting the socialisation of land, private ownership of land is hereby abolished; all land is proclaimed the property of the whole people and is handed over to the working masses, without any compensation and on the basis of equitable land use.

(b) All forests, mineral wealth and waters of national importance, and all live-stock and appurtenances, model farms and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property.

(c) The Soviet law on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council is hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

(d) The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first blow struck at international banking and finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

(e) The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.

(f) For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society and organising the economy, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.

(g) To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants, and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

### *Chapter 3*

4. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving, by the working people, at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace without annexations and indemnities, and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

5. With the same end in view, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

6. The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

### *Chapter 4*

7. The Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies considers that now that the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representative bodies—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

## Section Two

### GENERAL PROPOSITIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

#### *Chapter 5*

9. The main task of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, which is designed for the present transition period, consists in the establishment of the dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a strong All-Russia Soviet Government for the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of socialism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

10. The Russian Republic is a free socialist society of all the working people of Russia. All power within the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic belongs to the whole working population of the country, united in urban and rural Soviets.

11. The Soviets of regions which are distinguished by a special way of life and national composition may unite in autonomous regional unions, at the head of which, as at the head of any regional unions that may be formed, stand regional Congresses of Soviets and their executive bodies.

These autonomous regional unions join the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic as federations.

12. Supreme power in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic belongs to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and, in the interval between congresses, to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

13. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of conscience, the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and the freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is granted to all citizens.

14. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom to express their opinions, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic abolishes the dependence of the press on capital, places at the disposal of the working class and poor peasantry all the technical and material means of publishing newspapers, brochures, books and all other printed matter and guarantees their free dissemination throughout the country.

15. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of assembly, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, recognising the right of citizens of the Soviet Republic to hold gatherings, meetings, processions, etc. freely, places at the disposal of the working class

and poor peasantry all premises suitable for the holding of popular meetings, together with furnishings, lighting and heating.

16. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of unions, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, having broken the economic and political power of the propertied classes and thereby eliminated all obstacles which prevented workers and peasants in bourgeois society from enjoying freedom of organisation and action, renders workers and the poorest peasants all assistance, material and otherwise, for their association and organisation.

17. With the aim of assuring working people true access to knowledge, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic undertakes to provide the workers and poorest peasants with full, all-sided and free education.

18. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic recognises work as the duty of all citizens of the Republic and proclaims the slogan: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat!"

19. With the aim of fully defending the gains of the Great Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic recognises the duty of all citizens of the Republic to defend the socialist homeland and establishes universal military service. The sacred right to defend the revolution with arms is granted only to working people; non-working elements are charged with the performance of other military duties.

20. Proceeding from the solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic extends all political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners who reside on the territory of the Russian Republic for the purpose of working and belong to the working class or to the peasantry that does not make use of hired labour, and recognises that local Soviets have the right to grant such foreigners, without undue formalities, the rights of Russian citizenship.

21. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic grants the right of asylum to all foreigners persecuted for political and religious offences.

22. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, recognising the equal rights of citizens without distinction of race or nationality, declares that the establishment or permitting of any privileges or advantages on this basis, and also any oppression of national minorities or curtailment of their equal rights is contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic.

23. Guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic deprives of rights individual persons and individual groups who exercise them to the detriment of the interests of the socialist revolution.

## Section Three

### THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOVIET POWER

#### A. The Organisation of Central Power

##### Chapter 6

###### ON THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' RED ARMY AND COSSACK DEPUTIES

24. The All-Russia Congress of Soviets is the supreme power of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

25. The All-Russia Congress of Soviets is composed of deputies of urban Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 25,000 voters, and of representatives of provincial (gubernia) Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 125,000 inhabitants.

*Note 1.* In the event of the provincial Congress of Soviets not preceding the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, delegates to the latter are sent directly by the country (uyezd) Congresses of Soviets.

*Note 2.* In the event of a regional (*oblast*) Congress of Soviets directly preceding the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, delegates to the latter may be sent by the regional Congresses of Soviets.

26. The All-Russia Congress of Soviets is convened by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets not less than twice a year.

27. An Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets is convened by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets at its own initiative or at the request of local Soviets numbering not less than one-third of the total population of the Republic.

28. The All-Russia Congress of Soviets elects an All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets with not more than 200 members.

29. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets is fully responsible to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

30. In the interval between Congresses the supreme power of the Republic is the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

##### Chapter 7

###### ON THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SOVIETS

31. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets is the supreme legislative, administrative and controlling body of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

32. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets gives

general direction to the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and all the bodies of Soviet power in the country, unites and coordinates the work of legislation and administration, and is responsible for the implementation of the Soviet Constitution and the resolutions of All-Russia Congresses of Soviets and the central bodies of Soviet power.

33. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets considers and approves draft decrees and other proposals submitted by the Council of People's Commissars or individual departments, and also issues its own decrees and resolutions.

34. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets convenes the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, to which it submits a report on its activity and reports on the general policy and individual matters.

35. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets forms the Council of People's Commissars for the general administration of the affairs of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and its departments (People's Commissariats) for guiding the individual branches of administration.

36. Members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets work in the departments (People's Commissariats) or perform special assignments of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

## *Chapter 8*

### ON THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS

37. General administration of the affairs of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is vested in the Council of People's Commissars.

38. In the performance of this task, the Council of People's Commissars issues decrees, orders and instructions, and in general takes all measures necessary for the correct and speedy running of state affairs.

39. The Council of People's Commissars immediately informs the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets concerning all its resolutions and decisions.

40. The All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets has the right to rescind or suspend any resolution or decision of the Council of People's Commissars.

41. All resolutions and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars of major general political importance are submitted for the consideration and approval of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

*Note.* Measures requiring immediate implementation may be carried out by the Council of People's Commissars directly.

42. Members of the Council of People's Commissars stand at the head of individual People's Commissariats.

43. There are 18 People's Commissariats, namely:

- (a) Foreign Affairs;
- (b) Defence;
- (c) Navy;
- (d) Internal Affairs;
- (e) Justice;
- (f) Labour;
- (g) Social Security;
- (h) Education;
- (i) Post and Telegraph;
- (j) Nationalities;
- (k) Finance;
- (l) Railways;
- (m) Agriculture;
- (n) Trade and Industry;
- (o) Food;
- (p) State Inspection;
- (q) Supreme Council of National Economy;
- (r) Health.

44. Each People's Commissar has a Collegium, of which he is the chairman, and the members of which are approved by the Council of People's Commissars.

45. A People's Commissar has the right to take individual decisions on all questions within the jurisdiction of his People's Commissariat and must inform the Collegium accordingly. Should a Collegium disagree with a decision of a People's Commissar, the Collegium may, without suspending execution of the decision, appeal against it to the Council of People's Commissars or to the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

Individual members of a Collegium also have the right of appeal.

46. The Council of People's Commissars is fully responsible to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

47. The People's Commissars and the Collegia of People's Commissariats are fully responsible to the Council of People's Commissars and to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

48. The title of People's Commissar belongs exclusively to members of the Council of People's Commissars which administers the general

affairs of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and cannot be assumed by any other representatives of Soviet power either centrally or locally.

### *Chapter 9*

#### ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS AND THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SOVIETS

49. All questions of national importance fall within the jurisdiction of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets, including:

(a) Approval, amendment and amplification of the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(b) General direction of all the foreign and home policy of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(c) Establishment and changing of borders, and also the alienation of parts of the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic or the rights vested in it.

(d) Establishment of the borders and powers of the regional Soviet unions forming part of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and also the settlement of disputes between them.

(e) Admission of new co-members to the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and recognition of the withdrawal of individual parts of the Russian Federation from it.

(f) General administrative division of the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and approval of regional unions.

(g) Establishment and changing of systems of weights, measures and money in the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(h) Relations with foreign states, declaration of war and conclusion of peace.

(i) Conclusion of loans, customs, commercial and financial agreements.

(j) Establishment of the principles and the general plan of the whole economy and of its individual branches in the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(k) Approval of the budget of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(l) Establishment of national taxes and duties.

(m) Establishment of the principles of organising the Armed Forces of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(n) National legislation, the judicial system and legal proceedings, civil, criminal legislation, etc.

(o) Appointment and dismissal both of individual members of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of People's Commissars as a whole, and also the approval of the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

(p) Issue of general orders on the acquisition and loss of rights of Russian citizenship and on the rights of foreigners in the territory of the Republic.

(q) The right of amnesty, general and partial.

50. In addition to the above-mentioned questions the All-Russia Congress of Soviets and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets may decide on any other matter which they deem within their jurisdiction.

51. The following fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets:

(a) Establishment, amplification and amendment of the basic principles of the Soviet Constitution.

(b) Ratification of peace treaties.

52. Settlement of the questions referred to in items (c) and (h) of Article 49 is vested in the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets only if it is impossible to convene an All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

## **B. The Organisation of Soviet Power Locally**

### *Chapter 10*

#### ON CONGRESSES OF SOVIETS

53. Congresses of Soviets are composed in the following way:

(a) Regional Congresses of Soviets consist of representatives of city Soviets and uyezd Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 25,000 inhabitants, and from cities on the basis of one deputy per 5,000 voters, but not more than 500 delegates for the whole region, or of representatives of gubernia Congresses of Soviets elected according to the same ratio, if the Congress takes place immediately before the regional Congress of Soviets.

(b) Gubernia (area) Congresses of Soviets consist of representatives of city Soviets and volost (district) Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 10,000 inhabitants, and from cities on the basis of one deputy per 2,000 voters, but not exceeding 300 deputies for the whole gubernia (area); moreover, in the event of the uyezd

Congress of Soviets being convened immediately prior to the gubernia Congress, elections are held in accordance with the same ratio by the uyezd, and not the volost, Congress of Soviets.

(c) Uyezd (district) Congresses of Soviets consist of representatives of rural Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 1,000 inhabitants, but not exceeding 300 deputies for the whole uyezd (district).

(d) Volost Congresses of Soviets consist of representatives of all rural Soviets on the basis of one deputy per ten members of a Soviet.

*Note 1.* Uyezd Congresses of Soviets are attended by representatives of Soviets of towns with a population of not more than 10,000; rural Soviets of localities with a population of less than 1,000 unite to elect deputies for the uyezd Congress of Soviets.

*Note 2.* Rural Soviets with less than ten members send one representative each to the volost Congress of Soviets.

54. Congresses of Soviets are convened by the appropriate executive bodies of Soviet power of the territory (executive committees) at the discretion of the latter or at the request of Soviets of localities with a population of not less than one-third that of the total population of the area, but, in any event, not less than twice a year in the region, once every three months in the gubernia and uyezds, and once a month in the volosts.

55. The Congress of Soviets (regional, gubernia, uyezd and volost) elects its executive body—Executive Committee, the number of members of which should not exceed: (a) 25 for a region and gubernia, (b) 20 for an uyezd; and (c) 10 for a volost. The Executive Committee is fully responsible to the Congress of Soviets that elects it.

56. Within the limits of its jurisdiction a Congress of Soviets (regional, gubernia, uyezd and volost) is the supreme power in the territory; in the interval between Congresses the Executive Committee is the supreme power.

## Chapter 11

### ON SOVIETS OF DEPUTIES

57. Soviets of Deputies are formed:

(a) In cities on the basis of one deputy per 1,000 of the population, but not less than 50 and not more than 1,000 members.

(b) In localities (villages, stanitsas, and towns with a population of less than 10,000, auls, farmsteads, etc.) on the basis of one deputy per 100 of the population, but not less than three and not more than 50 deputies for each locality.

A deputy's period of office is three months.

*Note.* In rural localities, where practicable, questions of administration are decided by a general meeting of voters in the locality directly.

58. For day-to-day work the Soviet of Deputies elects from its members an executive body (Executive Committee) of not more than five in villages, and in cities on the basis of one per 50 members, but not less than 3 and not more than 15 (not more than 40 for Petersburg and Moscow). The Executive Committee is fully responsible to the Soviet that elects it.

59. A Soviet of Deputies is convened by the Executive Committee at the discretion of the latter or at the request of not less than half the members of the Soviet, but not less than once a week in cities and twice a week in localities.

60. Within the limits of its jurisdiction the Soviet, and in the case provided for in Article 57 (*Note*) a general meeting of voters, is the supreme power within the territory in question.

## Chapter 12

### ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF LOCAL BODIES OF SOVIET POWER

61. Regional, gubernia, uyezd and volost bodies of Soviet power, and also Soviets of Deputies have the following matters within their jurisdiction:

(a) the carrying into effect of all resolutions of the corresponding higher bodies of Soviet power;

(b) the taking of all measures to improve the territory in question culturally and economically;

(c) the settlement of all questions having a purely local significance (for the territory in question);

(d) the unification of all Soviet activity within the territory in question.

62. Congresses of Soviets and their Executive Committees have the right to supervise the activity of local Soviets (i.e., regional Congresses of Soviets have the right to supervise all the Soviets in the region, gubernia Congresses have the right to supervise all the Soviets in the gubernia except city Soviets that do not form part of uyezd Congresses of Soviets, and so on), and, in addition, regional and gubernia Congresses of Soviets and their Executive Committees have the right to rescind decisions of Soviets that operate in their area, notifying the Central Soviet power accordingly in the most important cases.

63. For the performance of the tasks entrusted to the bodies of Soviet power the Soviets (city and rural) and Executive Committees (regional, gubernia, uyezd and volost) form corresponding departments under department heads.

## Section Four

### ACTIVE AND PASSIVE FRANCHISE

#### Chapter 13

64. The following citizens of both sexes of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, who have reached the age of eighteen or over on election day, enjoy the right to vote and to be elected to the Soviets without distinction of religion, nationality, domicile, etc.:

(a) all those who earn their living by productive and socially useful labour, and also persons engaged in housekeeping that provides the former with the possibility of productive labour, including: factory and office workers of all types and categories employed in industry, commerce, agriculture and so on, peasants and Cossack farmers who do not make use of hired labour for the sake of obtaining profit;

(b) soldiers of the Soviet Army and Navy;

(c) citizens included in the categories listed in items (a) and (b) of this Article who are to any extent disabled.

*Note 1.* Local Soviets may, with the approval of the Central power, lower the age limit laid down in this Article.

*Note 2.* Of the persons who are not Russian citizens those indicated in Article 20 (Section Two, Chapter 5) also enjoy the active and passive franchise.

65. The following persons have neither the right to vote nor the right to be elected, even if they are included in one of the above-mentioned categories:

(a) persons employing hired labour for the purpose of obtaining profit;

(b) persons living on income not derived from their own labour, as for example: interest on capital, income from industrial enterprises, landed property, etc.;

(c) private merchants and trade and commercial agents;

(d) monks and clergymen of all denominations;

(e) employees and agents of the former police, the Special Gendarme Corps and the secret police, and members of the former ruling dynasty in Russia;

(f) persons legally recognised as mentally deranged or imbecile, as well as those under guardianship; and

(g) persons convicted for mercenary and infamous crimes for a period fixed by law or court sentence.

### *Chapter 14*

#### ON THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS

66. Elections are held, according to established custom, on days laid down by local Soviets.

67. Elections are held in the presence of an electoral commission and a representative of the local Soviet.

68. In cases when the presence of a representative of Soviet power is technically impossible, his place is taken by the chairman of the electoral commission, and in the absence of the latter, by the chairman of the electoral meeting.

69. A report is drawn up on the holding and results of elections and signed by the members of the electoral commission and a representative of the Soviet.

70. The detailed procedure for holding elections, and also the participation in them of professional and other workers' organisations, is determined by the local Soviets in accordance with the instructions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

### *Chapter 15*

#### ON THE VERIFICATION AND CANCELLATION OF ELECTIONS AND ON THE RECALL OF DEPUTIES

71. All material on the holding of elections is submitted to the Soviet in question.

72. The Soviet appoints a Credentials Commission for verifying elections.

73. The Credentials Commission informs the Soviet of the results of the verification.

74. The Soviet decides the question of the approval of disputed candidates.

75. In the event of the non-approval of a candidate the Soviet appoints new elections.

76. In the event of the incorrectness of the elections as a whole, the question of their cancellation is decided by the next supreme body of Soviet power.

77. The last instance of appeal on Soviet elections is the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

78. Electors who send a deputy to a Soviet have the right to recall him at any time and hold new elections in accordance with the general regulations.

## **Section Five**

### **BUDGETARY LAW**

#### *Chapter 16*

79. The financial policy of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic at the present transitional period of the dictatorship of the working people promotes the main aim of expropriating the bourgeoisie and preparing the conditions for the universal equality of all citizens of the Republic in the sphere of the production and distribution of wealth. To this end it aims to put at the disposal of the bodies of Soviet power all the necessary means for satisfying the local and national needs of the Soviet Republic, including intervention in the right of private ownership.

80. The state income and expenditure of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic are united in a national budget.

81. The All-Russia Congress of Soviets or the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets determine what types of incomes and dues are included in the national budget and what are at the disposal of the local Soviets, and also establish the limits of taxation.

82. The Soviets establish the levying of taxes and dues exclusively for the needs of the local economy. National requirements are met from funds issued by the State Exchequer.

83. No expenditure can be made from State Exchequer funds without the establishment of a credit for it in the list of state income and expenditure or the publication of a special order of the Central power.

84. For the satisfaction of requirements of national importance the appropriate People's Commissariats place at the disposal of local Soviets the necessary credits from the State Exchequer.

85. All credits made to the Soviets from State Exchequer funds, and also credits approved in estimates of local needs, are spent by them within the limits of the estimate sub-sections (paragraphs and articles) for their specific purpose and cannot be used to satisfy any

other requirements without a special order of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Council of People's Commissars.

86. Local Soviets draw up half-yearly and yearly estimates of income and expenditure for local needs. The estimates of rural and volost Soviets and the Soviets of cities that take part in uyezd Congresses of Soviets, and also the estimates of uyezd bodies of Soviet power are approved by the appropriate gubernia and regional Congresses of Soviets or their Executive Committees; the estimates of city, gubernia and regional bodies of Soviet power are approved by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Council of People's Commissars.

87. For expenditure not envisaged by estimates, and also in the event of the inadequacy of estimated expenditure, Soviets may request additional credits from the appropriate People's Commissariats.

88. In the event the local funds are inadequate to satisfy the local needs, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Council of People's Commissars authorise the local Soviets allowances or credits out of the State Exchequer to cover the immediate expenditure.

## Section Six

### ON THE EMBLEM AND FLAG OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

#### Chapter 17

89. The emblem of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic consists of a golden hammer and sickle in the rays of the sun depicted on a red background, placed crosswise with handles down and framed by ears of wheat with the inscription:

- (a) Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic; and
- (b) Workers of All Countries, Unite!

90. The commercial, naval and military flag of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic consists of a piece of red (scarlet) cloth, in the upper corner of which, next to the staff, are the letters "RSFSR" or the inscription "Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic" in gold.

Approved by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on  
10 July 1918

*Sobraniye uzakoneniy RSFSR*, 1918,  
No. 51, Art. 582

# CONSTITUTION OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

(Excerpt)

## DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE

1. Byelorussia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

2. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly suppress the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the First Byelorussian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies further resolves:

(a) private ownership of land is hereby abolished and all land is proclaimed national property;

(b) all forests, mineral wealth and waters, and also all live-stock and appurtenances, model farms and agricultural enterprises are proclaimed national property;

(c) for the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society, and organising the economy, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted;

(d) to ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

3. The First Byelorussian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies considers that now that the proletariat is waging the resolute struggle against its exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

## Section One

### GENERAL PROPOSITIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF BYELORUSSIA

4. The main task of the Constitution of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic, which is designed for the present transition period, consists in the establishment of the dictatorship of the urban and rural

proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a strong Soviet power for the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of socialism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

5. The Byelorussian Republic is a free socialist society of all the working people of Byelorussia. All power within the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia belongs to the whole working population of the country, united in urban and rural Soviets.

6. Supreme power in the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia belongs to the Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia and, in the interval between congresses to the Central Executive Committee.

7. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of conscience the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and the freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is granted to all citizens.

8. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom to express their opinions the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic abolishes the dependence of the press on capital and places at the disposal of the working class and poor peasantry all the technical and material means of publishing newspapers, brochures, books and all other printed matter and guarantees their free dissemination throughout the country.

9. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of assembly the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, recognising the right of citizens of the Soviet Republic to hold gatherings, meetings, processions, etc. freely, places at the disposal of the working class and the poor peasantry all premises suitable for holding popular meetings, together with furnishings, lighting and heating.

10. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of unions the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, having broken the economic and political power of the propertied classes and thereby eliminated all obstacles which prevented workers and peasants in bourgeois society from enjoying freedom of organisation and action, renders workers and the poorest peasants all assistance, material and otherwise, for their association and organisation.

11. With the aim of assuring working people true access to knowledge the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia undertakes to provide the workers and poorest peasants with full and all-sided free education.

12. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia recognises work as the duty of all citizens of the republic and proclaims the slogan: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat!"

13. With the aim of fully defending the gains of the great workers' and peasants' revolution, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia

recognises the duty of all citizens of the republic to defend the socialist homeland and establishes universal military service. The sacred right to defend the revolution with arms is granted only to working people; non-working elements are charged with the performance of other military duties.

14. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia grants the right of asylum to all foreigners persecuted for political and religious offences.

15. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, recognising the equal rights of citizens without distinction of race or nationality, declares that the establishment or permitting of any privileges or advantages on this basis, and also any oppression of national minorities or curtailment of their equal rights, is contrary to the fundamental laws of the republic.

16. Guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia deprives individual persons and individual groups of rights which they exercise to the detriment of the interests of the socialist revolution.

## Section Two

### THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOVIET POWER

#### ON THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS', PEASANTS' AND RED ARMY DEPUTIES OF BYELORUSSIA

17. The Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia is the supreme power of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic.

18. The Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia is convened by the Central Executive Committee of Byelorussia not less than twice a year.

19. An Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia is convened by the Central Executive Committee at its own initiative or at the request of local Soviets numbering not less than one-third of the total population of the republic.

20. The Congress of Soviets elects a Central Executive Committee of Byelorussia with not more than 50 members.

21. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Byelorussia is fully responsible to the Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia.

22. In the interval between Congresses the supreme power of the republic is the Central Executive Committee of Byelorussia.

#### ON THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

23. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Byelorussia is the supreme legislative, administrative and controlling body of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia.

24. The Central Executive Committee gives general direction to the activity of the workers' and peasants' government and all bodies of Soviet power in the country, unites and coordinates the work of legislation and administration and is responsible for the implementation of the Soviet Constitution and the resolutions of Congresses of Soviets of Byelorussia and the central bodies of Soviet power.

25. The Central Executive Committee considers and approves draft decrees and other proposals submitted by individual departments, and also issues its own decrees and resolutions.

26. The Central Executive Committee convenes the Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia, to which it submits a report on its activity and reports on general policy and individual matters.

27. The Central Executive Committee forms a Small and a Large Presidium for the general administration of the affairs of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia and for guiding the individual branches of administration.

28. The Small Presidium is single and common to these two bodies.

29. The Large Presidium of the Central Executive Committee is responsible for the general administration of the affairs of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia.

30. In the performance of this task the Large Presidium of the Central Executive Committee issues decrees, orders and instructions and in general takes all measures necessary for the correct and speedy running of state affairs.

### Section Three

#### ON THE EMBLEM AND FLAG OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF BYELORUSSIA

31. The emblem of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia consists of a golden hammer and sickle in the rays of the sun depicted on a red background, placed crosswise, with handles down and framed by ears of wheat with the inscription:

- (a) Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia; and
- (b) Workers of All Countries, Unite!

32. The commercial and military flag of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia consists of a piece of red (scarlet) cloth, in the upper left corner of which, next to the staff, are the letters "SSRB" in gold or the inscription "Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia".

Approved by the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets on  
3 February 1919

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 233

# CONSTITUTION OF THE UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

(Excerpt)

## I. BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic is an organisation of the dictatorship of the toiling and exploited masses of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry over their age-old oppressors and exploiters—the capitalists and landowners.

2. The aim of this dictatorship is to effect the transition from the bourgeois order to socialism by means of carrying out socialist transformations and systematic suppression of all counter-revolutionary attempts on the part of the propertied classes; following the fulfilment of these tasks the dictatorship of the proletariat will disappear, and subsequently, after the final shaping of the future communist order, the state too will disappear, giving way to free forms of community based on the principles of the organisation of universal labour for the benefit and fraternal solidarity of all.

3. For the purpose of fulfilling its main task the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic:

(a) implements measures directly aimed at destroying the existing economic system, which are expressed in the abolition of private ownership of the land and of all other means of production;

(b) in the sphere of the construction of state life, strengthens the power of the working class, establishing the right of participation in the exercise of state power exclusively for the toiling masses and completely removing the ruling classes from such participation;

(c) creates for the toiling masses the exclusive possibility of enjoying political rights (freedom of the spoken and printed word, assembly and union), removing from the enjoyment of these rights the ruling classes and all social groups that are close to them in their political position;

(d) organises the armed defence of the gains of the socialist revolution by drawing into this defence all the toiling elements in the country.

4. Making a firm break with the past and striving to destroy, together with the division of society into classes, national oppression and national strife also, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic declares its firm resolution to join a United International Socialist Soviet Republic as soon as the conditions for its emergence are created; at the same time the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic declares its complete solidarity with the Soviet Republics already in existence today

and its decision to enter into the closest political association with them for the joint struggle for the triumph of world communist revolution and in the closest cooperation in the sphere of communist construction, which is conceivable only on an international scale.

5. The power of the toiling masses in the territory of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic is exercised by the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies and other bodies chosen by the Soviets.

## II. THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOVIET POWER

### A. The Organisation of Central Power

6. The following come within the jurisdiction of Central Soviet power in the Ukraine:

(I) All questions of national importance, in particular:

(a) approval, amendment and amplification of the Constitution;  
(b) establishment and changing of the Republic's borders;  
(c) relations with foreign states, in particular, declaration of war and conclusion of peace;

(d) establishment of the principles of organising the armed forces;

(e) general guidance of home policy;

(f) civil, criminal and procedural legislation;

(g) establishment of the principles of socialist construction in the sphere of the economy;

(h) superintendence of the monetary system and organisation of the Republic's finance;

(i) state control over the activity of Soviet power, in particular, over the correctness, legality and expediency of financial expenditure.

(II) All questions which are not of state importance and which are submitted for consideration by the bodies of Central Soviet power.

7. The bodies of Central Soviet power are:

(a) the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies,

(b) the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets,

(c) the Council of People's Commissars.

8. The Congress of Soviets is convened by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets not less than twice a year, and at the discretion of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets may be convened more frequently.

9. The procedure for elections to the Congress of Soviets is laid down by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee.

10. The Congress of Soviets is the supreme power of the Ukrainian

Socialist Soviet Republic; in the interval between congresses the supreme power is the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets. Of the questions listed in Article 6, the following come within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Congress: the question in item (a), and also, with the exception mentioned in the note to Article 13, the questions on the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace.

11. The All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets and the Congress give general guidance to the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and all the bodies of Soviet power in the country, in particular, the following come within the exclusive jurisdiction of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets: the election and dismissal of People's Commissars and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the distribution of state income and duties between the central and the local power, and also the settlement of questions contained in Article 19 of the Constitution: the questions contained in items (b), (c), (d) and (g), and the approval of the annual budget are decided by the power both of the Congress, and of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

12. The All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets is responsible to the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets and is elected by the latter, its size being determined by the Congress, for the period up to the following Congress; the Council of People's Commissars is responsible to the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets and the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

*Note.* Retiring members of the Central Executive Committee are replaced in accordance with the resolutions of the latter.

13. Other questions relating to the sphere of legislation and the general administration of the country are also decided by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets with the exception contained in Article 16.

*Note.* Questions on the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace are decided by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets in case of emergency, when it is impossible to convene a congress of Soviets in time.

14. The management of the individual branches of administration of the country is entrusted to special departments of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets—the People's Commissariats—under heads elected by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets. The number and terms of reference of the departments and their internal organisation are established by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

15. The Council of People's Commissars consists of a Chairman and People's Commissars who include: (a) all heads of special depart-

ments of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets (Article 14); (b) other persons specially elected by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets at its discretion. Members of the Council of People's Commissars may at any time be dismissed by the power of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

16. The Council of People's Commissars has the right to consider all questions and matters relating to the sphere of legislation and the general administration of the country, but has the right to decide certain questions or matters by its own power only if generally or specially authorised by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets; otherwise decisions of the Council of People's Commissars are submitted for approval to the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

*Note.* The questions contained in Articles 10 and 11 may not be submitted by the Central Executive Committee for a final decision to the Council of People's Commissars.

17. The title of People's Commissar belongs exclusively to members of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and may not be assumed by other representatives of Soviet power either centrally or locally.

### **B. The Organisation of Soviet Power Locally**

18. The local bodies of Soviet power are:

(a) the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' (Village) and Red Army Deputies (urban and rural) and the executive committees elected by them;

(b) the Congresses of Soviets (gubernia, uyezd and volost) and the executive committees elected by them.

19. The term and procedure for the election of local bodies of Soviet power, the representation quota and the general principles relating to the internal organisation of these bodies, the delimitation of subjects of jurisdiction and power between them, and the delimitation of the same between them and the bodies of Central Soviet power are established by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

20. The right to vote and to be elected to the Soviets is enjoyed without distinction of religious creed, nationality, domicile, etc., by the following citizens of both sexes of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, who are 18 or over on election day:

(a) all those who earn their living by productive and socially useful labour, and also persons engaged in housekeeping that provides the former with the possibility of productive labour, as for example: fac-

tory and office workers of all types and categories employed in industry, commerce, agriculture and so on, peasants and Cossack farmers;

(b) soldiers of the Red Army and sailors of the Red Navy;

(c) citizens not included in the categories listed in items (a) and (b) as a result of disablement which has been properly certified.

*Note 1.* Local Soviets may, with the approval of the Central power, lower the age limit laid down in the present Article.

*Note 2.* Foreigners belonging to the working class and labouring peasantry also enjoy the franchise.

21. The following persons have neither the right to vote nor the right to be elected, even if they are included in one of the above-mentioned categories:

(a) persons employing hired labour for the purpose of obtaining profit;

(b) persons living on income not derived from their own labour, as for example: interest on capital, income from industrial enterprises, landed property, etc.;

(c) private merchants, trade and commercial agents;

(d) monks and clergymen of all denominations;

(e) employees and agents of the former police, the Special Gendarme Corps and the secret police, and members of the former ruling dynasty in Russia;

(f) persons legally recognised as mentally deranged or imbecile as well as those under guardianship; and

(g) persons convicted of mercenary and infamous crimes for a period fixed by law or court sentence.

### III. DECLARATION OF RIGHTS AND DUTIES

#### OF THE WORKING AND EXPLOITED PEOPLE OF THE UKRAINE

22. For the purpose of the all-round implementation of the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic grants the working masses full rights and opportunities in the sphere of social and political life.

23. In keeping with this general proposition, for the purpose of assuring working people true freedom of conscience, and also of making it impossible to use religion and the church in the interests of preserving the class system, the church is separated from the state, and all citizens have the right of propagating religious doctrines that do not pursue any social or political aims and anti-religious doctrines that are not opposed in spirit to the communist world outlook.

24. With the aim of assuring the working people true freedom to express their opinions, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic abolishes

the dependence of the press on capital and places at the disposal of the working class and poor peasantry all the technical and material means of publishing newspapers, brochures, books and all other printed matter and guarantees their free dissemination throughout the country.

25. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of assembly, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, recognising the right of working people of the Soviet Republic to hold gatherings, meetings, processions, etc. freely, places at the disposal of the working class and poor peasantry all premises suitable for holding popular meetings, together with furnishings, lighting and heating.

26. With the aim of assuring working people true freedom of unions, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, having broken the economic and political power of the propertied classes and thereby eliminated all obstacles which prevented workers and peasants in bourgeois society from enjoying freedom of organisation and action, renders workers and the poorest peasantry all assistance, material and otherwise, for their association and organisation.

27. With the aim of assuring working people true access to knowledge, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic undertakes to provide the workers and poorest peasants with an all-sided and free education.

28. The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic recognises work as the duty of all citizens of the Republic and proclaims the slogan: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat!"

29. With the aim of fully defending the gains of the Great Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic recognises the duty of all working people of the Republic to defend the socialist homeland and establishes universal military service. The sacred right of defending the revolution with arms is granted only to working people; non-working elements are charged with the performance of other military duties.

30. Proceeding from the solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic grants all the political rights of Ukrainian working people to foreigners who reside on the territory of the Ukrainian Republic for the purpose of working and belong to the working class or to the peasantry that does not make use of hired labour.

31. The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic grants the right of asylum to all foreigners persecuted for religious offences and for offences aimed against governments that protect the interests of the bourgeois classes.

32. The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, recognising the equal rights of working people without distinction of race or nationality,

declares that the establishment or permitting of any privileges or advantages on this basis, and also any oppression of national minorities or curtailment of their equal rights, is contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic.

33. Guided by the interests of the working class as a whole, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic deprives of political rights any persons or groups who exercise these rights to the detriment of the interests of the communist revolution.

#### IV. ON THE EMBLEM AND FLAG OF THE UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

34. The emblem of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic consists of a golden hammer and sickle in the rays of the sun depicted on a red background, framed by ears of wheat, with the inscription in Russian and Ukrainian:

- 1) UkSSR.
- 2) Workers of All Countries, Unite!

35. The commercial, naval and military flag of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic consists of a piece of red (scarlet) cloth, in the upper left corner of which, next to the staff, are the letters "UkSSR" in gold or the inscription: "Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic."

Approved by the Third All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets on 10 March 1919

*Sobraniye zakonenyi UkSSR*, 1919, No. 19, Item 204

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE KHOREZM PEOPLE'S SOVIET REPUBLIC

(Excerpt)

4. With the aim of marking the liberation of the Khivan people, the Khivan state is henceforth given the name of "Khorezm", illustrious in its history.

*Note.* The name of the town of Khiva in the centre remains as it was.

5. The state structure of the Khorezm state is a republic constructed in the form of Soviets, and the whole people of Khorezm administers the country through its representatives.

Approved by the First All-Khorezm Kurultai of People's Representatives on 30 April 1920

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2, 1960, pp. 503-04

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

1. The main task of the Constitution of the ASSR, which is designed for the present transition period, consists in the establishment of the dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a strong Soviet power for the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of socialism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

2. The Azerbaijan Republic is a free socialist society of all the working people of Azerbaijan. All power within the ASSR belongs to the whole working population of the country, united in urban and rural Soviets.

3. Supreme power in the ASSR belongs to the Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets, and in the interval between Congresses to the Azerbaijan Central Executive Committee.

Approved by the First Congress  
of Soviets of the Azerbaijan  
Socialist Soviet Republic on  
19 May 1921

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 326

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE BUKHARA PEOPLE'S SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

1. Having overthrown the power of the Emir, the revolutionary Bukhara people establishes a new order of state administration called a *Soviet Republic*.

2. With the collapse of Emir power and the transfer of state administration directly into the hands of the Bukhara people, the former Khanate of Bukhara is proclaimed the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic.

3. The Bukhara People's Soviet Republic is a single, indivisible and independent state within the limits of its present state frontiers.

4. State power in the Bukhara Republic throughout its territory both centrally and locally henceforth belongs entirely to the whole Bukhara people.

Adopted by the Second All-Bukhara Kurultai of People's Representatives on 23 September 1921

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, pp. 567-68

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

*(Excerpt)*

1. By the will of the insurgent workers and toiling peasants of Armenia, on 29 November 1920, Armenia was declared a Socialist Soviet Republic.

All power both centrally and locally belongs to Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Delegates.

2. All working people without distinction of nationality and religious denomination enjoy equal rights within the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia (SSRA).

12. The supreme power in the SSRA is the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Delegates of Armenia.

17. In the interval between congresses of Soviets of Armenia the Central Executive Committee is the supreme legislative, administrative and controlling body of the SSRA.

Approved by the First Congress  
of Soviets of the Socialist Soviet  
Republic of Armenia on 4 Feb-  
ruary 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 373

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA**

*(Excerpt)*

1. Having overthrown the state power of the Constituent Assembly and all the central and local bodies of the former Georgian Democratic Republic, the workers, toiling peasantry and Red Army of Georgia, followers of the behests of the Great October Revolution, establish hereby throughout the whole territory of the country the sovereignty and dictatorship of the proletariat, transferring full state power centrally and locally to the Soviets of their deputies.

*Note.* The following form part of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia on the basis of voluntary self-determination: the Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of Ajaria, the Autonomous Region of South Ossetia, and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Abkhazia which joins with the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia on the basis of a special treaty of union between these republics.

4. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia declares its firm readiness to join a united International Socialist Soviet Republic as soon as the conditions for its emergence are created. At the same time it acknowledges its full solidarity with the Soviet Republics in existence today and declares its decision to join with them: (a) in close friendly political and economic contact for the joint struggle for the final triumph of socialism; and (b) in the closest cooperation in the sphere of communist construction on an international scale.

5. The Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia is a sovereign state that does not permit of any equal alien rule on its territory and does not extend its rights beyond its borders.

8. Supreme power in the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia belongs to the All-Georgia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, and in the interval between congresses to the All-Georgia Central Executive Committee.

Approved by the First Congress  
of Soviets of the Socialist Soviet  
Republic of Georgia on 2 March  
1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 415

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC**

**Section One**

**Chapter 1**

THE REVOLUTION AND THE UNIFICATION  
OF THE WORKING PEOPLE OF TRANSCAUCASIA

*Article 1*

The October Revolution of the Russian proletariat, in having liberated working people from the class oppression by the capitalists and landowners, also brought liberation to the oppressed peoples of the former tsarist empire, granting them the right to self-determination up to and including secession. The ruling classes of Transcaucasia, in the person of their bourgeois-landowning parties, took advantage of this right to strengthen their political and economic rule and, at the diktat of German-Turkish imperialism, first cut off Transcaucasia from workers' and peasants' Russia, forming the Transcaucasian Republic headed by a Sejm, and then broke up Transcaucasia into three parts, separated in accordance with its national republics. Continuing a bitter struggle against Soviet power, in alliance with the Russian counter-

revolution and the imperialist Entente, the bourgeois-landowning ruling parties of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia plunged the popular masses of these countries into the bloody conflict, setting them against one another and fanning national hatred and strife.

#### *Article 2*

Only the revolutionary Soviet coup in the Republics of Transcaucasia, which overthrew the rule of the oppressors and established the power of the workers and peasants, brought the peoples of Transcaucasia national peace and prepared the ground for brotherly cohabitation and joint struggle against the common foe. On this ground the working people of the Transcaucasian Republics and the autonomous entities that form part of these republics, with the aim of concerted and planned work to restore the economy and for defence against internal and external enemies, have created the Federative Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia.

#### *Article 3*

This Union, continuing the cause of the strengthening of national peace and the further drawing together of the peoples of Transcaucasia on the basis of fraternal solidarity, has yielded positive results in the sphere of economic and state development. But, bearing in mind the position of the Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia which are facing an economic boycott by the international bourgeoisie and the threat of a possible invasion of the imperialist powers, the working people of the Transcaucasian Republics have recognised that further political, economic and military association is necessary and pressing. To this end the accredited representatives of all the republics of Transcaucasia, assembled at the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets, have resolved to form the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR).

#### *Article 4*

Loyal to the traditions and striving of the working masses for solidarity and fraternal unity, the Transcaucasian working people at the same time declare solemnly before the whole of working mankind their firm readiness to create a single Soviet front for the common struggle against world capital together with all workers and peasants of Soviet republics. Proceeding from this, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic regards as urgent the formation of a Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, a prototype of a powerful world union of all countries.

## Section Two

### Chapter 2

ON THE TRANSCAUCASIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF WORKERS',  
PEASANTS', RED ARMY AND SAILORS' DEPUTIES

#### *Article 5*

The supreme state power of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Red Army and Sailors' Deputies.

#### *Article 6*

The Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets is made up of representatives of city Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 3,000 voters and representatives of uyezd Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 15,000 inhabitants.

*Note.* Should republican congresses of Soviets precede the Transcaucasian Congress, delegates to the latter may be sent by republican congresses.

#### *Article 7*

The Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets is convened by the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee once a year.

#### *Article 8*

An Extraordinary Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets is convened by the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee at its own discretion or at the request of the Central Executive Committee of at least one of the republics that form the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

#### *Article 9*

The Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets elects the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee to consist of 150 members and 50 candidate members.

### Chapter 3

#### ON THE TRANSCAUCASIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

##### *Article 10*

In the interval between Transcaucasian Congresses of Soviets the supreme power of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

##### *Article 11*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee is fully responsible to the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets.

##### *Article 12*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee is the supreme legislative, administrative and controlling body.

##### *Article 13*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee gives general direction to the activity of the Workers' and Peasants' Government and all the bodies of Soviet power of Transcaucasia, unites and coordinates work on legislation and is responsible for the implementation of the Constitution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, resolutions of Transcaucasian Congresses of Soviets and all state bodies of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

##### *Article 14*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee considers and approves draft decrees and other proposals submitted by the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars and individual state bodies of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and also issues its own decrees and resolutions.

##### *Article 15*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee presents a report on its activity and reports on general policy and individual matters to the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets.

### *Article 16*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee elects the Presidium of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee to consist of 13 members, including three chairmen, one secretary and six candidate members of the Presidium.

### *Article 17*

The Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee is convened by the Presidium of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee once every four months for sessional sittings.

Extraordinary sessions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee are convened at the initiative of the Presidium of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, at the suggestion of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars, or at the request of one-third of the members of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

### *Article 18*

The Presidium of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee:

- (a) guides the sittings of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;
- (b) prepares material for sittings of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;
- (c) submits draft decrees for the consideration of sessions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;
- (d) supervises the implementation of the resolutions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;
- (e) between sessions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee issues decrees and resolutions on behalf of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, reporting accordingly to the latter;
- (f) conducts relations on behalf of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;
- (g) considers appeals for pardon, approves awards of the Order of the Red Banner and decides other questions relating to administration;
- (h) between sessions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee has the right to approve resolutions of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars, and also to suspend its decisions, submitting them for consideration at the next session of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee;

(i) appoints some People's Commissars at the representation of the Council of People's Commissars;

(j) is the guiding centre of instruction for all the work of both federal bodies of power, and of the Central Executive Committees of republics forming part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

#### *Article 19*

All questions at sessions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee are decided by a simple majority of the votes cast. Roll-call voting takes place at the written request of not less than twenty members of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

#### *Article 20*

For the general administration of the affairs of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee forms the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars, and also individual People's Commissariats and other bodies for guiding the individual branches of administration.

#### *Article 21*

The members of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee work in the Transcaucasian People's Commissariats and other bodies or perform special assignments of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

### **Chapter 4**

#### **ON THE TRANSCAUCASIAN COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS**

#### *Article 22*

At the head of the administration of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic stands the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars.

### Article 23

The Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars consists of a Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen and the following People's Commissars: (a) foreign affairs; (b) military and naval affairs; (c) foreign trade; (d) railways; (e) food; (f) finance; (g) workers' and peasants' inspection; (h) labour and (i) post and telegraphs. The Chairman of the Transcaucasian Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle Against Counter-Revolution, Profiteering and Malfeasance is an *ex officio* member of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars with a deciding vote.

### Article 24

The Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars forms a Supreme Economic Council as the body which directs the economic policy of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and guides the work of the republican councils of national economy and the republican economic councils.

### Article 25

In the performance of its task the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars issues decrees, orders and instructions and in general takes all measures necessary for the correct and speedy running of state affairs.

### Article 26

All resolutions and decisions of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars of major general political importance are submitted for the consideration and approval of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

*Note.* The measures outlined in the present article that require urgent implementation may be carried out by the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars directly.

### Article 27

The Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars is fully responsible to the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

### *Article 28*

The Transcaucasian People's Commissars are fully responsible to the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars and the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

### *Article 29*

Each Transcaucasian People's Commissar has a Collegium under his chairmanship, the members of which are approved by the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars.

### *Article 30*

A Transcaucasian People's Commissar has the right to take individual decisions on all questions within the jurisdiction of the relevant Commissariat and must inform the Collegium accordingly. Should a Collegium disagree with a decision of a People's Commissar, the Collegium may, without suspending execution of the decision, appeal against it to the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars or the Presidium of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee. Individual members of a Collegium also have the same right of appeal.

## **Chapter 5**

### **ON MATTERS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS AND THE TRANSCAUCASIAN CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### *Article 31*

All questions of national importance fall within the jurisdiction of the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets and the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, as for example:

- (a) approval, amendment and amplification of the Constitution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic;
- (b) admission of other state entities to the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and granting permission to individual parts thereof to withdraw from it;
- (c) establishment of the principles and general plan of the whole national economy and its individual branches on the territory of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and consideration of treaties on concessions;

(d) approval of the budget of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic;

(e) fixing federal and local taxes and setting up a Federal State Bank;

(f) organisation of a Federal Supreme Court;

(g) establishment of the principles of tenure and use of land and of mineral resources throughout the territory of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic;

(h) rescinding of resolutions of republican Congresses of Soviets, republican Central Executive Committees and republican Councils of People's Commissars that violate the Constitution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic;

(i) appointment and dismissal of individual members of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars and of the membership of the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars as a whole, and also approval of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars;

(j) right of amnesty;

(k) organisation of federal statistics;

(l) establishment of the principles of the judicial system and legal proceedings, and also of civil and criminal legislation and

(m) contracting foreign loans of a local nature.

### *Article 32*

The establishment, amplification and amendment of the basic principles of the Constitution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic comes within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets.

### *Article 33*

Settlement of the question contained in Article 32 is left to the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee only if it is impossible to convene the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets.

## Section Three

### Chapter 6

ON THE MUTUAL RELATIONS OF SUPREME STATE BODIES OF  
THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET  
REPUBLIC AND THE REPUBLICS THAT FORM PART OF IT  
AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOVIET POWER  
IN THESE REPUBLICS

#### *Article 34*

The supreme power in the republics that form part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is vested in the Congresses of Soviets and the Central Executive Committees elected and operating in accordance with the Constitutions of these republics.

#### *Article 35*

All questions of a republican nature come within the jurisdiction of the republican Congresses of Soviets and republican Central Executive Committees, with the exception of questions that come within the jurisdiction of the Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets and the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

#### *Article 36*

At the head of the administration of the republics that form part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic stand the Councils of People's Commissars, organised in the People's Commissariats of internal affairs, justice, education, agriculture, health and social security. The Councils of People's Commissars also include Authorised Representatives of People's Commissars of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic with a deliberative vote.

#### *Article 37*

Authorised Representatives of People's Commissars of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic in republics are appointed by People's Commissars of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic by agreement with the Central Executive Committee of the republic in question.

Authorised Representatives of People's Commissars of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic in republics carry out unconditionally all the directives and orders of their People's Commissar and at the same time are accountable in their day-to-day work to the Council of People's Commissars of the republic in question.

## Section Four

### Chapter 7

#### BUDGETARY LAW

##### *Article 38*

The state revenue and expenditure of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic are united in a national budget.

##### *Article 39*

The state revenue and expenditure of the republics that form part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, determined by special resolutions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, are united in republican state budgets which are approved by the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee and form an integral part of the national budget of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

In the event of expenditure exceeding revenue in the budgets of the individual republics the deficit is met from the State Exchequer of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

##### *Article 40*

Revenue and expenditure relating to the local economy, and also revenue and expenditure transferred by special resolutions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee to uyezds and towns, are united in local budgets of uyezd Soviets and city Soviets, the latter being singled out, by special resolutions of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, from the uyezds as special economic units. Local budgets are approved by the Central Executive Committees of the republics in question.

##### *Article 41*

The Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets or the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee establishes types of duties and income, and also their limits, and determines which income and expenditure and in which parts shall be included in the national budget, in the state budgets of the republics and in the local budgets.

##### *Article 42*

The republics that form part of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic establish the levying of local taxes and duties,

not established in the manner indicated in Article 41 exclusively for meeting the expenditure of their own and local budgets, but with the preliminary authorisation of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

#### *Article 43*

No expenditure from the funds of the State Exchequer can be made without the presentation of a credit for it listed in state revenue and expenditure or by a special resolution of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee.

#### *Article 44*

All credits represented in national or state republican budgets are spent within the limits of estimate divisions for their specific purpose and cannot be used to satisfy any other requirements without a special resolution of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee and the Transcaucasian Council of People's Commissars. Credits represented in local budgets are also spent within the limits of estimate divisions for their specific purpose and cannot be used to satisfy any other requirements without a special resolution of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the republic in question.

## **Section Five**

### **Chapter 8**

#### **ON THE EMBLEM AND FLAG OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC**

#### *Article 45*

The emblem of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic consists of a golden hammer and sickle placed crosswise with handles down in the upper section against the background of a mountain range and a rising sun, with a five-pointed red star above them. In the lower part of the emblem at the foot of the mountain range with three protruding peaks are: on the right—oil derricks, on the left—a smoking factory, and in the centre—a vine, cotton, rice, corn and ears of wheat. The whole emblem is framed with a red (scarlet) ribbon with the inscription "TSFSR" in gold letters from left to right in Armenian, Russian, Georgian and Turkic. At the base, edged with ribbon, is the slogan "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" on a golden background.

*Article 46*

The flag of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic consists of a piece of red (scarlet) cloth in the upper left corner of which, next to the staff, are the letters "TSFSR" inscribed in gold in a semi-circle, and above them is a red five-pointed star edged with gold.

**Section Six**

**Chapter 9**

ON THE RESIDENCE OF THE CENTRAL STATE BODIES

*Article 47*

The town of Tiflis is chosen as the residence of all central state institutions of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Approved by the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets on 13 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2, 1960, p. 483

**CONSTITUTION OF THE KHOREZM SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

1. Khorezm is a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Red Army and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, belongs to these Soviets. Full power in the Khorezm Republic belongs to the working people. . .

Adopted by the Fourth All-Khorezm Kurultai of Soviets on 20 October 1923

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7, 1965, p. 23

## Chapter IV

### **TREATIES CONCLUDED BETWEEN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS PRIOR TO THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

#### **DECLARATION OF THE FIRST ALL-BYELORUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS**

#### **ON ESTABLISHING A CLOSE FEDERATIVE UNION BETWEEN SOVIET BYELORUSSIA AND THE RSFSR**

Having overthrown the rule of Byelorussian landowners and the kulaks of the bourgeois Rada, the workers, peasants, day-labourers and all working people of Byelorussia have through their leader—the Communist Party of Byelorussia—proclaimed a socialist Soviet republic to demonstrate to the entire world that the workers and peasants of Byelorussia are determined to completely abolish the rule of capital and establish a socialist order. At the same time, the workers and peasants of Byelorussia realise that they are only one of the detachments in the enormous army of the proletariat, and that without close links with the workers and peasants of all Soviet republics they will not be able to build a new and free life and complete the socialist reforms. Soviet Byelorussia, which has emerged as an independent state on the ruins of serfowning tsarist Russia, recognises the necessity of a close economic and political association with its elder brother—the Russian Soviet Republic that has provided the Byelorussian Republic with considerable assistance in restoring its ravaged economy. Basing its decisions on the will of millions of Byelorussian working people, the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets decrees, of its own volition: “To open negotiations with the Russian Soviet Republic on the formation of a federative union between it and Soviet Byelorussia, and with this end in view to appoint a commission accountable to the body of power elected by the Congress. Taking into consideration close links and dependence existing between the workers and peasants of all parts of the former Russian Empire, the Congress believes that only a free and voluntary union of the working people of all independent Soviet republics will ensure the

victory of the workers and peasants in their struggle against the capitalist world. Therefore, the Congress calls on all fraternal independent socialist republics to follow in the steps of the workers and peasants of Byelorussia and begin negotiations on the establishment of a federative union with Soviet Russia. Only if they are united and consolidated in a single family of working people will the workers and peasants of the countries where the proletarian revolution has been victorious be able to carry aloft the banner of socialism throughout Europe and join in a Soviet union with the workers and peasants—the working people of the world.”

2 February 1919

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 232

RESOLUTION  
OF THE ALL-UKRAINE CENTRAL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ON JOINING THE MILITARY FORCES  
OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS

The fact that all Soviet republics have a common enemy requires united action on their part, as well as the centralisation of leadership. The necessity of being economical with the material resources of the republic demands their planned management. Therefore, the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee of Soviets, in conjunction with the Kiev Soviet of Workers' Deputies, the Kiev Uyezd Congress of Peasants' Deputies and representatives of Kiev trade unions and factory committees, *has resolved*:

(1) All existing Soviet republics should wage a joint armed struggle against the enemies of the Soviet republics.

(2) All material resources necessary to wage this struggle should be concentrated in a single centre.

Therefore, the Central Executive Committee delegates its Presidium to address the Central Executive Committees of all Soviet republics suggesting the elaboration of concrete ways and means of organising a united front of the revolutionary struggle.

18 May 1919

*Kommunisticheskaya partiya—vdokhnovitel i organizator obyedinitelnogo dvizheniya ukrainskogo naroda za obrazovaniye SSSR*, 1962, p. 129

DECREE  
OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE

**ON THE MILITARY UNION OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS:  
RUSSIA, THE UKRAINE, LATVIA, LITHUANIA,  
AND BYELORUSSIA FOR THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WORLD  
IMPERIALISM**

The Soviet socialist republics established by the working masses on the territories of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Byelorussia have repeatedly and for the entire world to hear declared that they are prepared to enter into peaceful negotiations to end the war imposed upon them. But the forces of world imperialism, which have united against the worldwide movement of the working people, which are consumed by the insane hope of conquering the whole world, and are craving for the unlimited exploitation of the riches of these countries, have ignored the peace initiatives of the working masses of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Byelorussia and are trying to suppress the Soviet power wherever it has been established by the mass revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. Having mobilised the monarchist and capitalist counter-revolutionary forces, world capitalism is, by a simultaneous attack on all fronts, trying to smother the power of workers and peasants. To be able to rebuff the attempt to cast back tens of millions of Russian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Byelorussian, and Crimean workers and peasants into slavery, they must join forces and centralise leadership in this dire struggle unto death. A military union of the above-mentioned Soviet socialist republics should be the first step in this direction. Therefore, recognising the sovereignty, freedom and the right to self-determination of the working people of the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, and the Crimea, and proceeding both from the resolution of the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee of 18 May 1918, and the suggestion of the Soviet governments of Latvia, Lithuania, and Byelorussia, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets recognises that it is imperative to consolidate (1) the military organisation and military command; (2) the councils of national economy; (3) railroad transport and its administration; (4) finances; and (5) the commissariats for labour of the Soviet socialist republics of Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, and the Crimea, so that the direction of the above-mentioned branches of the national economy will be brought under collegiate bodies.

With this end in view, the central executive committees and the Soviets of People's Commissars of the Soviet republics in question should reach agreement.

To achieve this, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee will appoint a commission which is to begin negotiations with representatives of the republican Central Executive Committees and to jointly elaborate the concrete norms of the merger and to define, prior to the final merger, the forms of activity.

1 June 1919

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1919,  
No. 21, Item 264

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FOURTH ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

ON INTER-STATE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UKSSR AND THE  
RSFSR

*(Excerpt)*

Solemnly proclaiming before the entire world the equality of all peoples and states and the resulting right of nations to self-determination, the Fourth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies considers it its duty to struggle for the consolidation of the Soviet power, which is the only power that can, having eliminated classes and liberated the workers and peasants from exploitation and oppression by landowners and capitalists, ensure their real freedom and independence.

The Fourth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets declares that, while retaining its independent constitution, the UkSSR is a member of the All-Russia Socialist Soviet Federative Republic, which is united by a single political and social system, a common struggle against the tsar, landowners and capitalists in the past and a common struggle for its existence at present, and states that only thanks to the assistance provided by the fraternal Soviet republics to each other over two and a half years were they able to survive in the cruel bloody struggle against innumerable bourgeois enemies. After occupation by German imperialists, Franco-Greek invaders and Russian White Guards, the Ukraine again became free only with the help of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. Now that the fertile lands of the Ukraine are for the fourth time occupied by the troops of the rapacious Polish gentry, the Ukrainian workers and peasants again turn for help to all peoples and republics that comprise the RSFSR.

The Fourth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets, confirming the agreement between the Central Executive Committees of the UkSSR and the RSFSR on the merger of the Commissariats for war, finance, rail-

way transport, national economy, post offices, telegraphs and labour, entrusts the future Central Executive Committee with continuing the policy aimed at closer association. Since, due to the occupation by Denikin's troops, the Ukraine was not able to be represented at the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets by its delegates, the Fourth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets, until the commission appointed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the federal constitution completes its work and the final decree of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets is issued, instructs the future Ukrainian Central Executive Committee to begin negotiation with the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets on the question of the representation of the Soviet Ukraine. For its part, the Congress suggests that 30 representatives of the Soviet Ukraine elected at the Fourth Congress of Soviets be included in the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR. All attempts to sever or weaken the union with Soviet Great Russia and other peoples and republics comprising the RSFSR, as well as nationalist and chauvinist persecution aimed at dividing the working and peasant masses, are counter-revolutionary in essence and are directed against the freedom and independence of the workers and peasants of the Ukraine.

20 May 1920

*Sobraniye zakonenyi UkSSR*, 1920,  
No. 13, Item 245

UNION TREATY  
BETWEEN THE RSFSR  
AND THE KHOREZM PEOPLE'S SOVIET  
REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic on the one hand, and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic on the other, have resolved to establish a close union. . . .

*Article 1*

Since the RSFSR has proclaimed the right of all peoples to self-determination and has renounced the colonial policy of the former Russian governments which exploited and oppressed the former Khiva Khanate and its working people, Russia unconditionally recognises the complete independence and sovereignty of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic and all consequences thereof and, striving to be true

to the principles for which the Russian working people are fighting, relinquishes forever all rights exercised by the former Russian governments towards the Khorezm Republic.

*Note.* Considering the fact that the desire of the working people of the former Khiva Khanate to dissociate themselves from the disgraceful past has led the Kurultai to rename it the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic, the RSFSR will consider it obligatory to refer to the former Khiva Khanate as the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KhPSR).

#### *Article 2*

In keeping with Article 1, the RSFSR will consider annulled all treaties and agreements concluded by the former governments and government bodies of Russia on the one hand, and the governments of the former Khiva Khanate on the other.

#### *Article 3*

The RSFSR will transfer to the independent KhPSR all real estate, i.e. land, waters, urban plots, buildings, plants and factories situated on its territory, which belonged to the Russian Republic and to Russian government agencies both by the right of ownership and the right of user.

#### *Article 4*

The RSFSR will consider annulled all agreements on concessions and will renounce the rights to land and waters granted to individual Russian citizens, companies or institutions by the governments of the former Khiva Khanate.

#### *Article 5*

The RSFSR will recognise as the property of the KhPSR all capitalist enterprises (banks, plants, factories, commercial firms, etc.) which belonged to Russian citizens and companies, as well as the property of these enterprises (houses, plots of land, equipment, etc.).

#### *Article 6*

Construction of new and modification of old irrigation installations (canals, dams, etc.) which might interfere with the existing irrigation system or irrigation projects of the other contracting party is to be

carried out on approval of a mixed commission on irrigation formed on a parity basis and guided by considerations of mutual benefit and technical expediency.

#### *Article 7*

The conditions of use of communication routes, telegraph, etc. will be established by special agreement and based on the principles of mutual benefit and technical expediency.

#### *Article 8*

The frontiers between the Russian and the Khorezm Republics will be accepted as they are.

#### *Article 9*

Territories of the former Khiva Khanate annexed by the former Russian governments will be included in the KhPSR if a free referendum ascertains the consent of the working people living in the territories annexed since 1872.

#### *Article 10*

The border-line between the two contracting parties in nature should be demarcated and the frontier posts established by a mixed commission comprising an equal number of representatives of both parties. When demarcating and establishing the border-line in nature, the above-mentioned commission will be guided by the national and economic considerations, following natural boundaries whenever possible. Settlements should be included as a whole in one state. In cases when the border-line goes through lakes or along rivers or canals, it will be considered passing along their middle.

#### *Article 11*

As far as navigation and fishing rights, as well as the right of transportation on frontier rivers, canals and lakes are concerned, the two parties will enjoy equal rights determined by a mixed commission formed on a parity basis, which will be summoned at the request of either of the two contracting parties.

#### *Article 12*

The common navigation right as provided for in Article 11 is also preserved by both parties if a former frontier water-route is includ-

ed as a whole in the territory of one state only, once regions which are now part of the RSFSR become part of the KhPSR on the basis of Article 9.

#### *Article 13*

The Constitution of the KhPSR recognises the political rights of foreign citizens who "have proved their loyalty to the Khorezmian, Russian or world revolution". Accepting this provision, the RSFSR will grant the political rights enjoyed by Russian citizens to those citizens of Khorezm in Russia who are members of the working class or that section of peasantry which does not exploit the labour of others, if they reside on the territory of Russia for the purpose of working. For its part, the KhPSR will grant political rights to Russian citizens on the basis of the above-mentioned provisions established by the RSFSR concerning citizens of KhPSR.

#### *Article 14*

If any regions populated by representatives of a nation which does not at present reside on the territory of Khorezm are included in the KhPSR on the basis of Article 9, all provisions of the RSFSR concerning the rights of national minorities adhered to by the government of the KhPSR are applicable to that nation as well.

#### *Article 15*

Citizens of Khorezm in Russia and Russian citizens in Khorezm will enjoy the same individual rights of personal freedom as the citizens of the other country, and will be obliged to submit to all decrees and regulations of the government and government organs of the country they are in.

*Note.* Any legacy left according to the laws of the relevant country by Khorezmian citizens on the territory of the RSFSR and by Russian citizens on the territory of the KhPSR will be forwarded by the authorities in charge to the representative of the country that the deceased had belonged to, to be disposed of in accordance with the laws of the republic whose citizen the deceased had been.

#### *Article 16*

Proceeding from the fact that a close fraternal union of all Soviet republics is necessary to achieve the worldwide victory of the working people, the contracting parties undertake:

(1) To prevent the formation or presence on their territories of governments, organisations, groups or individuals, whose objective is to struggle against the other contracting party or another Soviet republic; to prevent the recruiting or mobilisation on their territory of personnel for the armies of such governments, organisations or groups, as well as the presence of their representatives or officials.

(2) To prohibit states, organisations or groups whose objective is to struggle, directly or indirectly, against the other contracting party, from bringing to their territory or transporting through it anything which can be used against the other contracting party; to provide each other with all assistance with all available resources, including military, in order to protect the independence and freedom of the two Soviet republics from all enemies.

#### *Article 17*

To work out a common plan of action, centralise leadership and ready the forces which will safeguard the independence and freedom of both republics in the instances envisaged by Article 16, the two contracting parties will conclude a military-political pact.

#### *Article 18*

As former Russian governments and their henchmen, the rulers of Khiva, discouraged the enlightenment of the masses, and as the campaign to eliminate illiteracy and raise the cultural standards of the backward peoples is the responsibility of all the working people who have the means and the power to help the workers and peasants of these backward nations, the RSFSR undertakes to assist the KhPSR by sending instructors, teachers, teaching aids and books, organising the printing industry, etc.

#### *Article 19*

By virtue of the same considerations, the RSFSR will grant the KhPSR an extraordinary subsidy of 500,000,000 roubles.

#### *Article 20*

The KhPSR will not grant the right to open industrial, mining, agricultural, transport or other enterprises to any states other than the Soviet republics.

### *Article 21*

Proceeding from the desire of both republics to develop their productive forces, they will conclude an economic agreement based on reciprocity and the following principles in particular:

(1) The Russian Republic will furnish assistance to the Khorezm Republic by sending technical equipment, instruments, factory lines, personnel, etc.

(2) An exchange of Russian merchandise for Khorezmian raw materials will be conducted on the basis of production costs of both the Khorezmian raw materials and Russian merchandise, without extracting profit.

(3) The exchange will be conducted between the republics and not between individual producers or intermediaries, and will be carried out through appropriate government institutions.

(4) The RSFSR will assist the working people of the KhPSR by establishing schools, developing a system of technical education, organising instructors' courses, a cooperative system, etc.

### *Article 22*

The RSFSR and the KhPSR will exchange plenipotentiary diplomatic representatives.

### *Article 23*

The Treaty is subject to ratification.

### *Article 24*

The Treaty is made in the Russian and the Uzbek languages, both texts being authentic.

Done in the city of Moscow on 13 September 1920 in two copies.

13 September 1920

*Sobraniye zakoneny RSFSR*, 1921,  
No. 20, Item 161

## ECONOMIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE KHOREZM PEOPLE'S SOVIET REPUBLIC

Basing their actions on the Union Treaty concluded by the RSFSR and the KhPSR, and with a view to establishing correct commodity

exchange, the two republics have resolved to conclude this economic agreement. . . .

#### *Article 1*

Commodity exchange between the republics will be conducted through appropriate bodies in charge of foreign trade.

#### *Article 2*

Acting through the appropriate institution, the government of the KhPSR will inform the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade of its demand for goods available in the RSFSR and supplied by the latter according to their availability and the needs of Russian consumption, in quantities conformable to the Russian apportionment in accordance with the economic plan for the operational year.

#### *Article 3*

Proceeding from the principle of mutual support of the contracting parties, the Khorezm Republic will place at the disposal of the RSFSR all raw materials over and above those intended for internal consumption and will establish an official body to be responsible for government purchases, with a monopoly on foreign trade in those raw materials whose purveyance will be agreed by the two republics.

*Note.* As these products, the present agreement lists, above all, cotton and its products, furs, carpets, leather, wool and seed.

#### *Article 4*

The Russian Republic undertakes to place at the disposal of the Khorezm Republic the personnel necessary for organising the official institution in charge of purveyance and conducting purveyance campaigns.

#### *Article 5*

To conduct purveyance campaigns, the Russian Republic will allot in advance through the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade the necessary quantity of Russian banknotes and goods to the Khorezm Republic determined by agreement of the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade and the corresponding body in the KhPSR.

### *Article 6*

In Khorezm, the banknotes of the RSFSR will be in use on an equal basis with Khorezmian banknotes. The rate of exchange will be determined by a mixed commission for a definite period.

### *Article 7*

For the two republics to be able to settle accounts, the price of the commodities will be established annually for every coming year by the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade and the corresponding body in the Khorezm Soviet Republic on the basis of production costs of the goods exchanged, and according to the principle of non-extraction of profits.

### *Article 8*

Russian commodities offered for exchange cannot be sold by the Khorezmian government to the consumers for arbitrary prices but should be exchanged for raw materials on the basis of Russian tariffs according to their production costs, with up to 15 per cent of the price added for organisational expenses.

### *Article 9*

Commodity exchange with the producers of raw materials will be conducted by the Khorezm Republic through cooperatives, peasants' and handicraftsmen's unions, and village societies, with hoarders and profiteers debarred.

### *Article 10*

All merchandise will be carried from Russia to Khorezm and back duty free.

### *Article 11*

The party purchasing the merchandise will assume responsibility for damaged, lost, etc., goods from the moment they are signed for by a representative of the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade or the corresponding body in the KhPSR.

*Note.* Reception of Khorezmian raw materials and goods will be conducted by a representative of the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade in the localities in Khorezm indicated in the annually established economic plan. Reception of Russian merchandise will be conducted wherever the representative of the KhPSR body in charge of foreign trade is located.

### *Article 12*

To preserve the goods and raw materials stored by one party for the other, the Khorezm Republic will provide warehouses on its territory for the Russian Republic, and vice versa.

### *Article 13*

All shipped and received goods will be registered according to a uniform system agreed by the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade and the corresponding body in the KhPSR.

### *Article 14*

At the end of each year, there will be a settlement, with the debtor paying the creditor the difference.

*Note.* By mutual agreement, the difference is usable as advance payment for the next operational year.

### *Article 15*

The present agreement is made in the Russian and the Uzbek languages, both texts being authentic.

Done in the city of Moscow on 13 September 1920, in two copies.

13 September 1920

*Sobraniye zakoneny RSFSR*, 1921,  
No. 35, Item 187.

## TREATY BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE AZERBAIJAN SSR

### ON MILITARY AND ECONOMIC UNION OF THE TWO REPUBLICS

The Government of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic, on the one hand, and the Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, on the other, conscious of the profound community of the interests of the working masses of Azerbaijan and Russia and considering that only the full amalgamation of all forces of the two fraternal republics can assure them success in their hard struggle against their common enemy—the imperialist bourgeoisie, have determined to conclude this Treaty, and have appointed for this purpose as their respective representatives: [the list of the representatives follows].

The afore-said representatives, having exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed as follows:

1. Azerbaijan and Russia do hereby conclude a close military and financial-economic alliance.

2. The Government of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Government of the RSFSR will merge within the shortest possible time limits: (1) their military organisation and military command; (2) the bodies in charge of their respective national economies and foreign trade; (3) supply agencies; (4) railway and waterway transport and postal and telegraph services; (5) finance.

3. The procedure and form of merging the offices in charge of the above-mentioned sectors of national life shall be specified by particular agreements between the two Governments.

4. The present Treaty shall come into force upon signature and shall not be subject to special ratification.

In witness thereof, the representatives of both Parties have signed the present Treaty and affixed their seals thereto.

Done at Moscow in duplicate this 30th day of September one thousand nine hundred and twenty.

30 September 1920

*Sobraniye zakonov RSFSR*, 1920,  
No. 85, Item 426

AGREEMENT  
OF THE RSFSR WITH THE GOVERNMENT  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SSR  
ON A COMMON ECONOMIC POLICY

To concert and unite the economic policy of the RSFSR with that of the Azerbaijan Republic, the RSFSR and the Government of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic have agreed as follows:

1. The Azerbaijan National Economic Council shall establish its production plan in agreement with the general production plan of the RSFSR, with the Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC) taking all measures towards supporting and developing industry in Azerbaijan.

2. Proceeding from the principle of common merchandise inventories of both Republics, the Azerbaijan National Economic Council shall distribute all stocks of raw materials and manufactures at its disposal in agreement with the SNEC's plenipotentiary representative in the Azerbaijan Republic.

3. The SNEC shall undertake to finance Azerbaijan's industry. The

SNEC may also directly finance individual sectors of industry and enterprises in Azerbaijan in agreement with the Azerbaijan National Economic Council.

4. The monopolies in operation on the territory of the RSFSR shall be progressively enforced on the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic. Special monopolies may be established in Azerbaijan only in agreement with the SNEC.

5. Common price limits for raw materials and manufactures shall be fixed.

6. The SNEC shall appoint its representative to the National Economic Council of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic with a deciding voice.

Done at Moscow in duplicate, this 30th day of September one thousand nine hundred and twenty.

30 September 1920

*Sobraniye uzakoneniya RSFSR*, 1920,  
No. 85, Item 426

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RSFSR  
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE AZERBAIJAN SSR

ON MATTERS OF FOREIGN TRADE

1. All economic relations with other countries, the sale and export of the products of the soil and industry of Azerbaijan, as well as the import of foreign-made articles and goods from Russia, and the conclusion of economic treaties shall be governed by the general principles and rules established by the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the RSFSR and through its appropriate agencies.

2. The conduct of trade relations with Transcaucasia, Persia and Turkey shall be left to the Foreign Trade Office of the Azerbaijan Republic, with the merchandise inventory of the goods available in Azerbaijan, except oil, for commodity exchange with the said countries to be made up by the Azerbaijan Foreign Trade Office. The amount of oil required for the said commodity exchange and for Azerbaijan's domestic consumption shall be made available to the Azerbaijan Foreign Trade Office in agreement with the SNEC and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the RSFSR.

3. All of Azerbaijan's agreements and commercial treaties with a third country may take place only after prior discussion and agreement with the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the RSFSR.

4. All export-import payments shall be made towards the end of the trading year.

5. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade of the RSFSR shall appoint its plenipotentiary representative to the Council of People's Commissars of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic with a deciding vote.

Signed at Moscow in duplicate, this 30th day of September one thousand nine hundred and twenty.

30 September 1920

*Sobraniye zakononiy RSFSR*, 1920,  
No. 85, Item 426

AGREEMENT  
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RSFSR  
WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE AZERBAIJAN SSR

**ON THE MERGER OF ADMINISTRATION OF POSTAL, TELEGRAPH,  
TELEPHONE AND RADIOTELEGRAPH SERVICES**

1. The organisation, development and exploitation of postal, telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph communications and relations of the Azerbaijan Republic shall come under the same ordinances, rules and tariffs as established for the postal and telegraph services of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

2. The major lines of postal, telegraph and telephone communications, coming from the Russian Republic, high-capacity radio stations on the territory of Azerbaijan as well as international postal and telegraph lines shall be under direct control of the RSFSR People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services.

3. Supervision of the conformity of the postal, telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph communications mentioned in Article 2, in terms of organisation, development and exploitation, to the interests of the Azerbaijan SSR and the actual control of the above-mentioned local lines shall be exercised by the People's Commissar for Postal and Telegraph Services of the Azerbaijan SSR, appointed by the Azerbaijan Government in agreement with the RSFSR People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services.

4. No accounts shall be settled as regards the postal, telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph exchanges between the Russian and Azerbaijan Republics, the only exception being that the totals of mutually-exchanged remittances shall be subject to registration at points fixed for this purpose as a transitional measure pending agreement between the People's Commissariats for Finance of the two Republics.

5. Telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph materials shall be supplied to the Azerbaijan Republic by the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of the Russian Republic. The People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of Azerbaijan shall return to the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of Russia those materials which will have been found superfluous for direct consumption by the local network. The procedure for the settlement of accounts on this subject, should such a settlement take place, shall be established by agreement between the People's Commissariats for Finance of the two Republics.

6. As a temporary measure, prompted by the state of war, all urgent negotiations with the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of Azerbaijan and all postal and telegraph operations shall be carried out by the representative of the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of the RSFSR for the South-East.

7. The present Agreement shall invalidate the earlier agreements between the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of the RSFSR and the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic.

Done at Moscow in duplicate, this 30th day of September one thousand nine hundred and twenty.

30 September 1920

*Sobraniye uzakoneny RSFSR*, 1920,  
No. 85, Item 426

WORKERS' AND PEASANTS'  
TREATY OF UNION  
BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC  
AND THE UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

The Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, on the one hand, and the Government of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, on the other, proceeding from the right of nations to self-determination, proclaimed by the Great Proletarian Revolution, recognising the independence and sovereignty of either contracting Party, and realising the need to rally their forces for defence as well as for their economic development, have resolved to conclude the present Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union. . . .

## I

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic do hereby enter into a military and economic union.

## II

Both States deem it necessary to announce that all common obligations which they will henceforward assume in respect of other States may be conditioned only by the community of the interests of the workers and peasants in whose name the present Treaty of Union between the Republics is hereby concluded, and no obligations in respect of whosoever shall follow for the UkSSR from the mere fact of the territory of the UkSSR having belonged to the former Russian Empire.

## III

For a better attainment of the purpose indicated in Paragraph I, the two Governments declare to be amalgamated the following Commissariats: (1) Military and Naval Affairs; (2) Supreme National Economic Council; (3) Foreign Trade; (4) Finance; (5) Labour; (6) Railways and (7) Postal and Telegraph Services.

## IV

The amalgamated People's Commissariats of the two Republics shall form part of the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars and have their representatives in the Council of People's Commissars of the UkSSR, approved and controlled by the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee and the Ukrainian Congress of Soviets.

## V

The order and form of internal administration of the amalgamated Commissariats shall be established by special agreement between the two Governments.

## VI

Administration and supervision of the amalgamated Commissariats shall be exercised through the instrumentality of the All-Russia Congresses of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, as

well as of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to which the UkSSR shall send its representatives by decision of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

## VII

The present Treaty shall be subject to ratification by the respective supreme legislative bodies of the two Republics.

Done and signed in duplicate in the Russian and Ukrainian languages at the city of Moscow, this 28th day of December one thousand nine hundred and twenty.

*Supplementary Ruling  
to the Order of Business  
of the All-Russia Congresses of Soviets*

At a Congress of Soviets, either Contracting Party shall be entitled to demand that, in regard of unamalgamated Commissariats, the other Party shall have solely advisory powers.

28 December 1920

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR, 1921,  
No. 1, Item 13*

WORKERS' AND PEASANTS'  
TREATY OF UNION BETWEEN THE RSFSR  
AND THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF BYELORUSSIA

*(Excerpt)*

The Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, on the one hand, and the Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, on the other, proceeding from the right of nations to self-determination proclaimed by the Great Proletarian Revolution, recognising the independence and sovereignty of either Contracting Party and realising the need to rally their forces for defence as well as for their economic development, have resolved to conclude the present Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union. . . .

*Article I*

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia do hereby enter into a military and economic union.

## *Article II*

The two States deem it necessary to announce that all common obligations which they will henceforward assume in respect of other States may be conditioned only by the community of the interests of the workers and peasants in whose name the present Treaty of Union between the Republics is being concluded, and no obligations in respect of whosoever shall follow for the SSRB from the mere fact of the territory of the SSRB having belonged to the former Russian Empire.

## *Article III*

For a better attainment of the purpose indicated in Article I, the two Governments declare to be amalgamated the following Commissariats: (1) Military and Naval Affairs; (2) Supreme National Economic Council; (3) Foreign Trade; (4) Finance; (5) Labour; (6) Railways and (7) Postal and Telegraph Services.

## *Article IV*

The amalgamated People's Commissariats of the two Republics shall form part of the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars and have their representatives in the Council of People's Commissars of the SSRB, approved and controlled by the Byelorussian Central Executive Committee and the Congress of Soviets.

## *Article V*

The order and form of internal administration of the amalgamated Commissariats shall be established by special agreements between the two Governments.

## *Article VI*

Administration and supervision of the amalgamated Commissariats shall be exercised through the instrumentality of the All-Russia Congresses of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies, as well as of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to which the SSRB shall send its representatives by decision of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

## *Article VII*

The present Treaty shall be subject to ratification by the respective supreme legislative bodies of the two Republics.

Done and signed in duplicate in the Russian and Byelorussian languages at the city of Moscow, this 16th day of January 1921.

16 January 1921

*Izvestia VTsIK*, No. 74, 6 April 1921

TREATY OF UNION  
BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE BUKHARA SOVIET REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

The October Revolution, which has overthrown in Russia the yoke of capital which oppressed the working masses, has established the right of free self-determination for all the peoples of the former Russian Empire.

Guiding themselves by this principle and renouncing, in particular, the colonial policy of the former capitalist governments of Russia which exploited the working masses of Bukhara, along with other peoples of the East, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic does hereby unconditionally recognise the full sovereignty and independence of the Bukhara Soviet Republic with all the consequences flowing from this recognition and does for all time relinquish all the rights which had been instituted by Russian tsarism in respect of Bukhara.

Taking into account the revolution in Bukhara, which expressed the will of its working people, the RSFSR hereby admits as mandatory for itself the name of the Bukhara Soviet Republic for the former Bukhara Khanate.

Proceeding from the profound understanding that not only is there no difference of interests between the working masses of all nations, but that the only way for them to improve their living conditions is through their common struggle and joining of forces against the world imperialist bourgeoisie; proceeding from the need to draw up a common plan of struggle for independence and coordinate their forces in good faith, as well as to ensure uniform standards of training; proceeding from the conviction that the working masses, having ruled out the possibility of capitalist exploitation of each other, are interested in consolidating the people's economy and in developing their productive forces; and considering that only a close alliance of the working people of the East and the West will ensure them victory, and that all Soviet Republics must take the path of fraternal alliance, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Bukhara Soviet Republic have resolved to conclude the present Treaty of Union. . . .

### *Article 1*

Both Contracting Parties shall consider null and void, since the signature of the present Treaty, all the treaties and agreements concluded by Russian tsarism and by the subsequent bourgeois governments of Russia, as equally by the Turkestan Socialist Soviet Republic with the former Emir's Government.

### *Article 2*

Concurrently with the conclusion of the present Treaty, the two Parties shall undertake to conclude a military-political agreement.

*Note.* Pending the ratification of such an agreement, the interim military-political agreement, concluded by the plenipotentiary representative of the RSFSR in Bukhara and the Bukhara Soviet Republic in November 1920 shall remain in force.

### *Article 3*

The two Contracting Republics do hereby reciprocally undertake:

(1) Not to allow their territory to be used for the formation or presence of governments, organisations, groups or individuals aiming to act against any other Soviet Republic or overthrow its government, nor allow its territory to be used for a mobilisation or voluntary recruitment, whether of its own citizens or of citizens of other states, in the armies hostile to the Soviet Republics.

(2) To ban, by taking all measures of prevention, the importation or transshipment of arms belonging to, or meant for any organisations directly or indirectly fighting any one of the Soviet Republics, and capable of being used by them for that fight.

(3) To defend the independence of the two Soviet Republics from incessant encroachments on their very existence by the world bourgeoisie and its agents, the two Contracting Republics hereby undertake to lend each other mutual support.

### *Article 4*

The two Contracting Parties do hereby acknowledge as existing henceforward the national boundary between the RSFSR and the BSR which existed by the time the present Treaty is concluded. A mixed commission shall be elected on terms of parity for the precise demarcation of the boundaries.

### *Article 5*

The two Contracting Parties do hereby undertake to start forthwith to conclude a special economic agreement to be governed by the following provisions:

(1) Coordination of the economic policy and economic plan of the two Republics as applied to the economic structure of the two Contracting Parties.

(2) Coordination of the trade policies of both Republics and the drafting of a common trade plan based on the nationalisation of foreign trade and on the principle of direct commodity exchange.

(3) Mutual recognition of the preferential right of either Contracting Party to install all kinds of industrial, agricultural, transport, mining or other enterprises on the territory of the other Party.

(4) The RSFSR shall assist the BSR in meeting the latter's industrial and other economic needs by the provision of requisite materials, instruments of production, technical specialists as well as by the granting of non-repayable assistance.

### *Article 6*

For the regulation and proper exploitation of the waterway system of the Zaravshan River common for both Republics and for precluding the possibility of a violation of the interests of either Contracting Party, the RSFSR and the BSR do hereby establish that the installation of more irrigation networks and the reconstruction of any of the present ones that may entail a change in the operation of the entire Zaravshan network (and other rivers common to both Republics) may take place only when approved by the Mixed Irrigation Commission, formed on parity terms.

### *Article 7*

The RSFSR shall transfer to the BSR without compensation all the real estate, land, urban plots, plants, installations and factories which belonged to the Russian Republic by the right of property or by the right of use and are situated within the limits of the former Bukhara Khanate with all the implements relating to them. The moment of actual transfer, which both Parties hereby undertake to start immediately upon the ratification of the present Treaty, shall be considered as the moment of the transfer of the title to the above-mentioned real estate.

*Note 1.* The Amu-Darya flotilla or parts of it and the railway line and telegraph service within the territory of Bukhara shall be turned over to the BSR

as its own property along with other installations and enterprises; with the procedure of the transfer of the flotilla, the railway line and the telegraph service as well as the form of administration unflinchingly providing for their proper functioning and the uniformity of technical maintenance shall be fixed by a special commission.

*Note 2.* The two Contracting Parties consent to invite representatives of the Khorezm Soviet People's Republic to take part in a commission to decide on the number of Amu-Darya flotilla steamships being turned over to the BSR with a view to properly securing the interests of the said Republic in this matter.

### *Article 8*

The BSR shall, in turn, transfer to the RSFSR without compensation the real estate within the limits of its territory belonging to the government of the Emir of Bukhara as well as private capitalist enterprises of Bukhara citizens, banks, factories and commercial establishments subject under the laws of the RSFSR, in consequence of their size, to nationalisation with all the inventory and real estate belonging to these establishments. The moment of actual transfer, which the two Parties hereby undertake to start immediately upon the ratification of the present Treaty of Union, shall be the moment of the transfer of the title to the said property.

*Note.* If, under the laws of the RSFSR, any capitalist enterprises of Bukhara citizens or the Bukhara Emir's Government had been confiscated before the conclusion of the present Treaty, the actual moment of confiscation shall be considered as the moment of the transfer.

### *Article 9*

All the concessions to the lands and waters under the agreements concluded by the former government of the Emir of Bukhara and individual Russian citizens, institutions and societies shall be considered null and void. All private Russian capitalist enterprises (plants, factories and commercial establishments), based on the exploitation of wage labour, and, in consequence of their size, subject to nationalisation under the laws of the RSFSR and located within the boundaries of the Bukhara Khanate, the RSFSR hereby recognises to be the property of the BSR with all the assets belonging to them (houses, land, implements) without any compensation to be paid to their former owners. Besides, the BSR hereby undertakes not to turn over these enterprises to private ownership, but to exploit them as public enterprises of the BSR.

### *Article 10*

The commodities belonging to the citizens of the RSFSR in larger proportions than legally permissible under the laws of the RSFSR and now in the territory of the BSR, shall pass into the ownership of the BSR, while reciprocally the commodities of Bukhara and its private citizens, confiscated by the authorities of the RSFSR, shall be considered the latter's property. A mixed commission elected on terms of parity shall make an assessment of the commodities of the nationals of both Parties. According to this assessment the two Contracting Parties shall reciprocally reimburse the cost of the goods with banknotes.

### *Article 11*

The full-fledged citizens of the RSFSR, residing in the territory of the BSR and, equally, the full-fledged citizens of the BSR residing in the territory of the RSFSR for purposes of productive employment, shall enjoy all the political rights of the Republic in whose territory they are residing, regardless of the term of residence.

### *Article 12*

The citizens of the BSR (in the RSFSR) and the citizens of the RSFSR in Bukhara shall be bound by all decrees and rulings of the Republic and its authorities in whose territory they are.

*Note 1.* The legacy left by a citizen of one Party in the territory of the other shall be turned over, in full, to a representative of the state whose national the deceased was so as to be disposed of under national laws.

*Note 2.* The citizens of the BSR, residing in the territory of the RSFSR and vice versa, shall not be subject to a call-up for the armies of the countries they are living in and shall serve their term of conscription under the laws and regulations of their own State.

### *Article 13*

In accordance with the desire of the population of the entire territory, expressed at the Regional Congress of the Soviets of the Russian Settlements in Bukhara (October 1920), the RSFSR shall transfer to the BSR the settlements which are under the jurisdiction of the Executive Committee of the aforesaid Congress, with all the consequences following therefrom, relinquishing all title to them for all time.

*Note 1.* The real estate of the RSFSR sited within the territory to be transferred with all the appurtenances, shall be turned without compensation into an asset of the BSR.

*Note 2.* Details of the transfer of the Russian settlements shall be specified by a special treaty.

*Note 3.* The citizens of the former Russian settlements who resided within their boundaries before the Bukhara Revolution may take Bukhara citizenship with permission for this to be granted by the Nazir for Foreign Affairs together with a plenipotentiary representative of the RSFSR.

#### *Article 14*

The RSFSR hereby undertakes to assist the working people of Bukhara by sending instructors, including military instructors knowing native tongues, teachers, textbooks and aids, literature, printing equipment and so on.

#### *Article 15*

The RSFSR and the BSR shall reciprocally exchange their permanent plenipotentiary representative offices.

#### *Article 16*

The present Treaty shall be subject to ratification to be followed by the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

#### *Article 17*

The present Treaty, done in the Russian and Uzbek languages, shall enter into force on the day of exchange of the instruments of ratification.

Done at Moscow on this 4th day of March 1921.

4 March 1921

*Sobraniye zakoneny RSFSR*, 1921,  
No. 73, Art. 595

### ECONOMIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE BUKHARA SOVIET REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

The Russian Socialist Federative Republic, on the one hand, and the Bukhara Soviet Republic, on the other, with a view to concerting their economic policies to the benefit of both Republics, and in pursuance of Article 5 of the Treaty of Union, have resolved to conclude the present economic agreement. . . .

### *Article 1*

Trade relations between both Contracting Parties shall be based on commodity exchange with the unflinching observance of the principle of cost price excluding all profit.

### *Article 2*

Commodity exchange between both Republics shall be maintained exclusively through the instrumentality of government bodies in charge of foreign trade, not by private individuals.

### *Article 3*

The BSR shall grant a preferential right to the RSFSR over other states, institutions and private individuals with regard to commodity exchange relative to the surplus goods which the BSR may find possible to export.

### *Article 4*

The RSFSR shall, on its part, fully comply with the demand of the BSR for commodities subject to exchange and commodities exported from Bukhara at prices to be fixed by mutual agreement between the RSFSR Commissariat for Foreign Trade and the appropriate agency of the BSR.

### *Article 5*

Requests for commodities needed by the BSR and the RSFSR, timing and procedure of exchange shall be established by representatives of the foreign trade agencies of both Republics.

### *Article 6*

Upon the conclusion of the present Agreement, both Parties shall undertake to work out a provision for a common tariff area and the removal of internal tariff frontiers, with the tariff treaties of the BSR with other foreign states as well as the order of the customs protection of the frontiers between the BSR and these states to be established by mutual agreement between the Contracting Parties.

#### *Article 7*

Trade of both Republics with other foreign states shall be conducted under a common import-export plan to be drawn up with unflinching respect, in equal measure, for all the needs, requirements and interests of both Contracting Parties.

*Note.* The common import-export plan thus established must also provide for the possibility and necessity of direct foreign trade of the BSR with foreign nations bordering on it.

#### *Article 8*

The BSR shall undertake to prevent by all means any penetration of its territory by rapacious industrial capital and the foreign bourgeoisie.

#### *Article 9*

On its part, the RSFSR shall undertake to provide the utmost assistance to the BSR for the installation and development of its industrial and other economic enterprises through the provision of the required materials, instruments of production and the like, on the understanding that, in the event of the above articles being unavailable in the RSFSR, the BSR shall order them abroad while observing the common import-export plan through the representative offices of the RSFSR or directly through the representative offices of the BSR in Western Europe.

#### *Article 10*

In the event of any scheme for any industrial or other enterprises to be established in the territory of the BSR requiring a large investment in terms of labour and productive resources, with the BSR being unwilling or in no position to install or operate such enterprises, the BSR shall relegate the preferential right to set up these enterprises to the RSFSR or other Soviet Republics.

#### *Article 11*

Concessions to foreign capitalist powers with permission for establishing enterprises mentioned in Article 10 shall be granted by the BSR only upon prior agreement with the RSFSR.

#### *Article 12*

The RSFSR shall likewise undertake to place at the disposal of the BSR the required contingent of engineers, technicians, hydraulic en-

engineers and other specialists both for prospecting and surveying and for the organisation of extractive and manufacturing industries of the BSR and equally for irrigation work.

#### *Article 13*

To provide immediate assistance to the BSR to meet its current needs, the RSFSR shall grant the BSR an unrepayable loan in banknotes in an amount to be established by both Parties.

#### *Article 14*

The present Agreement shall be subject to ratification, to be followed by the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

#### *Article 15*

The present Agreement, done in the Russian and Uzbek languages, shall enter into force on the day of exchange of the instruments of ratification.

4 March 1921

*Sobraniye uzakoneny RSFSR*, 1921,  
No. 73, Art. 596

### AGREEMENT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RAILWAYS OF TRANSCAUCASIA

1. All the operational railways passing within the limits of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, shall be unified within a single railway network of the Transcaucasian Republics.

2. The entire network of railways of the Transcaucasian Republics shall be controlled by one railway administration of the Transcaucasian Republics with the headquarters at Tiflis and the commissar thereof forming part of the Economic Council of the Transcaucasian Republics on common terms.

3. The Administration of the Transcaucasian Railways and the entire network thereof shall be formed after the pattern established for the railway lines of the RSFSR and shall operate in keeping with the corresponding generally established rules and provisions.

4. The Administration of the Transcaucasian Railways shall form part of the Transcaucasian Railway District and shall come under its control on common terms.

5. Consequently, the separate Commissariats for Railways shall be immediately abolished in the aforesaid Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.

*Note.* The final time-limit for the handover by the Commissariats shall be two weeks.

6. The entire technical staff, inventories and equipment both of the railways of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, and of the Commissariats for Railways to be abolished shall be turned over to the Administration of the Transcaucasian Railways.

7. The Transcaucasian District shall arrange, through the Administration of the Transcaucasian Railways, for equipment essential to the railway lines to be procured within the boundaries of Transcaucasia through the Councils of People's Commissars of the Azerbaijan, Georgian and Armenian Republics and through the Commissariat for Foreign Trade.

8. The demand of the Transcaucasian railways for material and technical and financial facilities shall be included in the supply plan for the railway lines of the RSFSR and shall be governed by the procedure established for the entire railway network.

9. To settle the arrangements for local shipments between the Transcaucasian railways, the Black Sea and Caspian sea transport, there shall be established under the Administration of the Transcaucasian Railways, with its chief as chairman, a Transcaucasian Shipment Board of the Transcaucasian Railway District. The statute of the Board shall be drawn up within a fortnight and endorsed by the Transcaucasian District Shipment Committee.

16 April 1921

*NKID, Sbornik deistvuyushchikh dogovorov, soglasheniy i konventsiy (People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Collected Treaties, Agreements and Conventions in Force), Third Issue, 1922, pp. 10-11*

WORKERS' AND PEASANTS'  
TREATY OF UNION BETWEEN THE RSFSR  
AND THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

*(Excerpt)*

The Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, on the one hand, and the Government of the SSRG, on the other, proceeding from the right of nations to self-determination proclaimed by the Great Proletarian Revolution, recognising the independence

and sovereignty of either Contracting Party, and realising the need to rally their forces for defence against external enemies as well as for their economic development, have resolved to conclude the present Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union. . . .

#### *Article 1*

The RSFSR and the SSRG do hereby enter into a military and economic alliance.

#### *Article 2*

The two Republics hereby announce that all common obligations which they will henceforward assume may be conditioned only by the community of the interests of the workers and peasants in whose name the present Treaty of Union between the Republics is being concluded and that no obligations shall follow for the SSRG from the mere fact of the territory of the SSRG having belonged to the former Russian Empire.

#### *Article 3*

For a better attainment of the purpose indicated in Article 1, the two Governments hereby agree to conclude an additional agreement to merge their military organisation and military command as well as those economic agencies which may be found expedient to so merge.

The aforesaid agreement shall provide for the procedure and form of amalgamated agencies.

#### *Article 4*

The management of amalgamated agencies as well as control over them shall be exercised through the instrumentality of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies as well as through the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to which the SSRG will delegate its representatives.

The procedure of delegating such representatives is subject to ratification by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

#### *Article 5*

The present Treaty shall enter into force upon signature.

Done and signed in duplicate at Moscow, this 21st day of May 1921.

21 May 1921

*NKID, Sbornik deistvuyushchikh dogovorov. . .*, Third Issue, 1922, pp. 18-19

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE RSFSR AND THE SOCIALIST  
SOVIET REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA  
ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

*(Excerpt)*

In pursuance of Article 3 of the Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union of this date, the Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia have resolved to conclude the present Agreement on Financial Matters. . . .

*Article 1*

With a view to lending each other assistance in restoring the national economies of Russia and Georgia, the Contracting Parties do hereby agree to advance each other credits on account of estimate calculations in a measure to meet the actual need.

The accounts arising from the credits to be granted in virtue of the present Article shall be settled depending on the general financial position of the two Parties and under a specific agreement on each particular occasion.

*Article 2*

With a view to concerting the financial policies of both Contracting Parties, the People's Commissar for Finance of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic shall have his own permanent representative in Georgia, forming part of the Council of People's Commissars of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia, with voting powers.

*Article 3*

With a view to coordinating the estimates with the general plan targets of the two Republics and making these estimates uniform, there shall be established a special Estimates Commission in the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia under the chairmanship of the People's Commissar of Finance of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia to consist of a representative delegate of the People's Commissar of Finance of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic under the Council of People's Commissars of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia, a representative of the amalgamated People's Commissariat whose estimate is under consideration, a representative of the People's-

Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia and a representative of the Department of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia concerned.

#### *Article 4*

The financial estimates of state revenue and expenditure by the People's Commissariats of Georgia, subject to amalgamation with the appropriate People's Commissariats of the RSFSR, shall be brought by each People's Commissariat individually before the Estimates Commission, as provided for in Article 3 of the present Agreement, with the rulings of this Commission, with all relevant documents, to be submitted to the appropriate People's Commissariat of the RSFSR to be passed on by the established procedure.

#### *Article 5*

The estimates of the unamalgamated People's Commissariats shall be considered in the order indicated in Article 4 of the present Agreement, with the difference being that the rulings of the Estimates Commission, provided for in Article 3 of the present Agreement, shall be referred, with all documents, to the Council of People's Commissars of Georgia for confirmation.

#### *Article 6*

Control over the fulfilment of the estimates mentioned in Articles 4 and 5 of the present Agreement shall be exercised by the People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the SSRG.

#### *Article 7*

The banknotes, units of account and other units of payment of the RSFSR and the SSRG shall be equally current in the territory of the two Republics.

#### *Article 8*

The present Agreement shall enter into force upon signature.  
Done and signed in duplicate form at Moscow, this 21st day of May 1921.

21 May 1921

*NKID, Sbornik deistvuyushchikh dogovorov...*, Third Issue, 1922, pp. 20-22

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE RSFSR  
AND THE BYELORUSSIAN SSR ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

*(Excerpt)*

In pursuance of Article 5 of the Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union of 16 January 1921, the Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia have resolved to conclude the present Agreement on Financial Matters. . . .

*Article 1*

With a view to concerting the financial policies of both Contracting Parties, the People's Commissar for Finance of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic shall have his own permanent representative delegate in Byelorussia, forming part of the Council of People's Commissars of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, with voting powers.

*Article 2*

The imposition of new money taxes and levies (including express levies to meet local needs) within the boundaries of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, shall be effected in agreement with the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR under the terms of Article 81 of the Constitution of the RSFSR. All the taxes levied in the territory of Byelorussia shall be deposited with the cash offices of the People's Commissariat of Finance and entered under the appropriate ledgers of the register of national revenue.

*Article 3*

All the cash offices of the People's Commissariat of Finance inside the SSRB shall be subordinate to the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR and operate under the general cash-keeping rules for these institutions of the RSFSR and under the general supervision of a representative delegate of the People's Commissariat of Finance assigned to the Council of People's Commissars of the SSRB.

*Article 4*

With a view to coordinating the estimates with the general plan targets of the two Republics and making these estimates uniform there shall be established in the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia a

special Estimates Commission in the People's Commissariat of Finance of the SSRB under the chairmanship of the People's Commissar of Finance (who is, besides, a representative delegate of the RSFSR People's Commissariat of Finance) to comprise, apart from the aforementioned People's Commissar of Finance of the SSRB, a representative of the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, and a representative of the People's Commissariat of the same Republic whose estimate is under consideration and, if need be, representatives of other Commissariats concerned of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia shall also be invited.

#### *Article 5*

The financial estimates of state expenditure of Byelorussia's People's Commissariats, amalgamated with the respective People's Commissariats of the RSFSR, shall be brought by each People's Commissariat individually before the Estimates Commission, provided for in Article 4 of the present Agreement; the rulings of the said Commission, with all relevant documents, shall be submitted to the appropriate People's Commissariat of the RSFSR to be passed on by the established procedure, and simultaneously to the Council of People's Commissars of the SSRB which shall communicate its judgement on the said estimates to the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR through the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR.

#### *Article 6*

The estimates of the unamalgamated People's Commissariats shall be considered in the order indicated in Article 5 of the present Agreement with the difference that the rulings of the Estimates Commission, provided for in Article 4 of the present Agreement, shall be forwarded with all relevant documents to the Council of People's Commissars of Byelorussia to be confirmed and then to the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR to be reported to the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR and to be included in the Consolidated Budget of the RSFSR.

#### *Article 7*

In respect of all other conditions and procedure for the planning, consideration, confirmation and allocation of credits and the execution of the estimates, the estimates of the SSRB shall conform to the gener-

al rules concerning estimates and the Consolidated (Federal) Budget of the RSFSR and of the Socialist Soviet Republics united with it.

*Article 8*

Control over the execution of the estimates mentioned in Articles 5 and 6 of the present Agreement shall be exercised by the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the RSFSR.

*Article 9*

The present Agreement shall enter into force upon signature. Done and signed in duplicate form in the Russian and Byelorussian languages in the city of Moscow, this 26th day of July 1921.

26 July 1921

*NKID, Sbornik deistvuyushchikh dogovorov...*, Second Issue, 1921, pp. 5-6

AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE RSFSR  
AND THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

*(Excerpt)*

With a view to consolidating the fraternal and union relations between the SSRA and the RSFSR, the Government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic have resolved to conclude the present Agreement on Financial Matters. . . .

*Article 1*

With the aim of concerting the financial policies of both Contracting Parties, the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR shall have as its permanent representative in Armenia the People's Commissar of Finance of Armenia, elected on a par with other People's Commissars and appointed by the Central Executive Committee of Armenia in agreement with the People's Commissar of Finance of the RSFSR.

## *Article 2*

The imposition of new money taxes and levies (including express taxes to meet local needs) within the boundaries of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia shall be effected in agreement with the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR under the terms of Article 81 of the Constitution of the RSFSR. All taxes and levies collected in the territory of Armenia shall be deposited with the cash offices of the People's Commissariat of Finance of the SSRA and entered under the appropriate ledgers of the register of national revenue.

## *Article 3*

All the cash offices of the People's Commissariat of Finance inside the SSRA shall be subordinate to the People's Commissariat of Finance of the RSFSR through the People's Commissariat of Finance of the SSRA and operate under the general cash-keeping rules for these institutions in the RSFSR.

## *Article 4*

With a view to coordinating the estimates with the general plan targets of the two Republics and making these uniform, there shall be established a special Estimates Commission in the Socialist Republic of Armenia under the chairmanship of the People's Commissar of Finance of the SSRA, comprising a representative of the People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and a representative of the department concerned of the SSRA.

## *Article 5*

The financial estimates of state revenue and expenditure of the People's Commissariats of Armenia, amalgamated, by agreement between the RSFSR and the SSRA, with the respective People's Commissariats of the RSFSR, shall be brought by each People's Commissariat individually before the Estimates Commission, provided for in Article 4 of the present Agreement; the rulings of the Commission, with all relevant documents, shall be submitted to the Council of People's Commissars of the SSRA for confirmation and, subsequently, to the corresponding People's Commissariat of the RSFSR to be passed on by the established procedure.

## *Article 6*

The estimates of the unamalgamated People's Commissariats shall be considered in the order indicated in Article 5 of the present Agree-

ment with the difference that the rulings of the Estimates Commission, provided for in Article 4 of this Agreement, shall be forwarded, with all the documents, to the Council of People's Commissars of Armenia to be confirmed, and subsequently to the People's Commissariat of Finance to be entered into the register of state revenue and expenditure and reported to the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR.

#### *Article 7*

The execution of the estimates referred to in Articles 5 and 6 of the present Agreement shall be supervised by the People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the SSRA.

#### *Article 8*

The banknotes, units of account and other units of payment of the RSFSR and the SSRA shall be equally current in the territory of the two Republics.

#### *Article 9*

This Agreement shall enter into force upon signature. Done and signed at Moscow, this 30th day of September 1921, in duplicate.

30 September 1921

*Sobraniye uzakonenyi RSFSR*, 1921,  
No. 72, Item 588

ON THE DELEGATION  
OF THE POWERS OF REPRESENTATION  
OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS  
AT THE ALL-EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE  
TO THE RSFSR

**(Agreement)**

*(Excerpt)*

## II

### **Minutes of the Conference of 22 February**

The representatives of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia, the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic, the Socialist Soviet

Republic of Georgia, the Far Eastern Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Khorezm Soviet Republic [the list of plenipotentiary representatives follows], having considered the issue of representation of the interests of the said Republics at the All-European Economic Conference due to take place in accordance with the invitation of 13 January 1922 from the Supreme Council of the major allied and associated powers, *have resolved*:

On the basis of the indissoluble fraternal and union bonds linking all the above-listed independent Republics with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and with a view to most effectively ensuring the interests of these Republics at the aforesaid Conference, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic shall hereby be called upon to represent and defend the interests of the said eight Republics at this Conference and conclude and sign, on their behalf, the Acts which might be worked out at this Conference as well as all kinds of individual international treaties and agreements, directly or indirectly connected with this Conference, both with the states represented at the said Conference and with all other states, and to take all steps following therefrom.

In witness thereof, the afore-mentioned plenipotentiary representatives have signed the present Protocol and affixed their seals thereto.

Done at Moscow, in the Kremlin, this 22nd day of February 1922, in nine authentic copies.

### III

#### **Declaration by M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee**

The undersigned Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, acting by virtue of the powers conferred on him by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee at its extraordinary session of 27 January 1922, does hereby accept with satisfaction the commission from the Union and fraternal Republics, as recorded in the present Protocol and fully consistent with the interests and prospects of the Russian Republic. The Government of the Russian Republic will take all steps to have the interests of all the states, bound to it by indissoluble, fraternal and allied ties, properly defended at the Conference. It will watchfully see that the delegation empowered by the Government of the Russian Republic to represent Russia and her allies at the all-European Conference, steadfastly defend their interests, and will unflinchingly notify the Governments of the Union and fraternal Republics about the progress of the Conference.

Done at Moscow, in the Kremlin, on this 22nd day of February 1922, in nine authentic copies.

22 February 1922

*Istoriya Sovetskoy Konstitutsii. Sbornik dokumentov 1917-1957* (History of the Soviet Constitution. Collected Documents of 1917-1957), published by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Moscow, 1957, p. 172

AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
THE RSFSR, ON THE ONE HAND,  
AND THE AZERBAIJAN SSR,  
THE ARMENIAN SSR AND THE GEORGIAN SSR,  
ON THE OTHER,  
ON THE MERGER OF ADMINISTRATION OF POSTAL, TELEGRAPH,  
TELEPHONE AND RADIOTELEGRAPH SERVICES

1. The organisation, exploitation and development of postal, telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph communications and relations within the boundaries of the Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia shall hereby be amalgamated within a single Transcaucasian Postal and Telegraph District Administration with headquarters at Tiflis.

2. The Transcaucasian Postal and Telegraph District Administration shall be organised after the pattern established for the postal and telegraph districts of the RSFSR, and shall operate under the appropriate general rules and regulations.

3. The Chief of the Transcaucasian Postal and Telegraph District shall be appointed by the People's Commissar for Postal and Telegraph Services of the RSFSR and shall sit on the Economic Council of the Transcaucasian Republics on a par with everybody else.

4. In this connection, the Transcaucasian Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services and its representatives in the Soviet Socialist Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, shall hereby be abolished with a 30-day deadline, starting from the day of signature of the present Agreement.

5. All the technical staffs, inventories and materials of the postal, telegraph, radiotelegraph and telephone network of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia as well as of the abolished Transcaucasian Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services and its representatives shall be placed under control of the Transcaucasian Postal and Telegraph District.

6. The demand of the Transcaucasian Postal and Telegraph District for postal, telegraph, telephone and radiotelegraph materials shall be included in the supply plan of the People's Commissariat for Postal and Telegraph Services of the RSFSR, with the procurement of materials available in Transcaucasia made through the National Economic Councils of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia and also through their foreign trade organisations.

Done in quadruplicates at Moscow, this 24th day of May 1922.

24 May 1922

*NKID, Sbornik deistvuyushchikh dogovorov. . .*, Third Issue, 1922, pp. 12-13

**II**  
**FORMATION OF THE UNION**  
**OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.**  
**THE 1924 CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR.**  
**DEVELOPMENT OF THE USSR**  
**AS A FEDERAL STATE**

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Chapter V

**LEGISLATIVE ACTS OF THE CONGRESSES OF SOVIETS**  
**OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS AND THE UNION OF SOVIET**  
**SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ON THE FORMATION OF THE**  
**UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD SESSION  
OF THE ALL-UKRAINE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
(SIXTH CONVOCATION)

**ON RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET REPUBLICS**

Recognising the nationalities policy pursued by the Government to be correct, the Third Session of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee (Sixth Convocation) deems it necessary to call attention to a number of points requiring a fuller and clearer definition of the relationships between the fraternal Soviet Republics.

Internationally, the Soviet Republics continue to be in a capitalist encirclement but, on the other hand, they are starting business intercourse with the capitalist world which has not desisted from attempting to establish an economic dictatorship over them and wipe out the gains of the October Revolution.

Along with that, the New Economic Policy, while strengthening the petty-bourgeois groups and influences, opens yet another danger of separatist-chauvinistic, as well as Great-Power Russian tendencies manifesting themselves and thus endangering the unity of the proletarian-peasant front of the Soviet Republics.

On the other hand, the 5-year record of government and practice of relations between the Soviet Republics compels a further step forward in federal development, therefore the session of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee, underscoring the full equality of rights of all the Contracting Soviet Republics and their quite voluntary close worker and peasant alliance, deems it necessary to call on the Government to enter into negotiations with the Governments of the Soviet Republics about the institution of federal legislative and executive

bodies (the federal Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars) and, in particular, the bodies in charge of external relations in general and foreign trade in particular. Relevant amendments to the treaties of union shall be submitted to the next, Seventh, Congress of Soviets.

16 October 1922

*Sobraniye zakonenyi UkSSR*, 1922,  
No. 45, Item 670

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA  
ON THE REPORT ON THE TRANSCAUCASIAN FEDERATION  
AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Second Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies of Armenia, having heard the Report on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, ardently welcomes this proposal in the belief that the time has come for establishing this Union, necessitated as it is by the requirements of our economic and political development. The Congress hereby underlines that the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics meets the interests of all the Soviet Republics, in particular, the interests of the workers and peasants of Soviet Armenia. As the foundation of this Union, the Congress does hereby adopt the following draft:

"To conclude a Treaty establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics between the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Transcaucasian Republics and the RSFSR, granting each of them the right of free secession from the Union.

"To consider as the supreme authority of the Union the Federal Central Executive Committee consisting of representatives of the Central Executive Committees of the RSFSR, the Transcaucasian Federation, the Ukraine and Byelorussia in proportion to the number of nations they represent. To consider the Federal Council of People's Commissars, appointed by the Federal Central Executive Committee, as the Executive of the Central Executive Committee of the Union.

"To merge the People's Commissariats for Foreign Affairs, the People's Commissariats for Foreign Trade, the People's Commissariats for Military Affairs, the People's Commissariats for Railways and the People's Commissariats for Postal and Telegraph Services of these Federations and Republics, incorporated in the Union, with the identical People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; however, the relevant People's Commissariats of the Union should

have their own representative delegates in the Federations and Republics, with a small staff, to be appointed by the People's Commissariats of the Union with the consent of the Central Executive Committees of the Federations and Republics.

"To consider it necessary for representatives of the Republics concerned to form part of the representative offices of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade abroad.

"To subordinate the People's Commissariats of Finance, Food, National Economy, Labour and Inspection, of the Republics and Federations, as equally the central agencies in charge of action against counter-revolution, to the appropriate People's Commissariats and to the Council of Trade and Defence of the Union of the Republics.

"To consider the rest of the People's Commissariats, as those of Justice, Education, the Interior, Agriculture, Health and Social Security, to be independent and sovereign."

3 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, pp. 395-96

**DECLARATION  
OF THE SEVENTH ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET  
REPUBLICS**

The profound community of the class interests of the proletarians of all nations makes it imperative for their structural connection and unity to be strengthened in the face of world capital.

At the very outset of the Great October Revolution, the class solidarity of the workers and peasants of Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Republics laid the sound foundation of their closest association and actual unity in their common struggle against the reign of capitalists and landlords. Only due to this fraternal alliance, which was born, grew and gained strength in the thunder and storm of the Civil War, could the working masses of the Soviet Republics win and uphold their right to power, the land, factories and plants, in battle against the fierce attacks of the united camp of the capitalist vultures of the whole world.

The state of relative calm which we have achieved at the cost of the greatest sacrifice and effort is still threatened by the danger of a repetition of violent attempts by the capitalist powers to destroy the fruit of our victories. Our continued international isolation is a clear sign of the manifestly hostile position of the bourgeois countries which

are not putting up with the very existence of the Soviet Republics. In particular, this hatred shows itself in the incessant attempts of the West European bourgeoisie to undermine our strength by exploiting and inflating nationalistic and chauvinistic passions among a certain section of the petty bourgeoisie and intelligentsia of some Soviet Republics (the bands of Petlyura in the Ukraine, the Mensheviks in Georgia, the Mussavatists in Azerbaijan, the Dashnaks in Armenia, the National Union in Russia).

The implementation of the New Economic Policy and the relatively rapid growth of petty-bourgeois elements increase the danger of intensification of these nationalistic moods, hostile to the proletariat, gaining ground both in the shape of a revival of Great-Power Russian tendencies, on the one hand, and the separatist-chauvinistic trends, on the other. At the same time, the necessity, following from the fact of our international isolation, of relying, wholly and entirely, on the national forces and resources of the Soviet Republics in their internal development, demands a further intensification and extension of their economic unity opening up an opportunity of posing and resolving economic objectives which none of them can resolve on its own.

Under these circumstances, the only correct policy in the interest of the working class and the peasantry is one of rallying and uniting all the forces of the Soviet Republics and strengthening the united worker-peasant front as much as possible.

Basing itself on the foregoing, the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies totally approves the Government's stand on this subject as expressed in the resolution of 16 October of this year passed by the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee.

The Seventh Congress of Soviets, in full agreement with the wishes and will of the working people of the Ukraine, is hereby addressing a fraternal appeal to the workers and peasants of Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to get down forthwith to formalising the actually existing Union of Soviet Republics and so setting up a united socialist worker-peasant front against the front of the world bourgeoisie.

The Congress is firmly convinced that such an integrated Union of Socialist Soviet Republics formalising as it does their close economic and political relationship based on the principle of equality and, at the same time, ensuring the independence of their national and cultural development and necessary safeguards of displaying economic initiative by each of the members of the Union, will be the best way to resolve the national question in the spirit of international proletarian

solidarity, the first step forward towards the establishment of what will be the World Soviet Republic of Labour and a solid bulwark of the interests of the workers and peasants not only of the allied nations, but of those of the rest of the world as well.

13 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 151

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SSR (SECOND CONVOCATION)**

**IN SUPPORT OF THE ENTRY  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN FEDERATION INTO  
THE UNION OF SOVIET REPUBLICS**

The Second Session of the Azerbaijan Central Executive Committee (Second Convocation), having heard Comrade Buniat-zade's report on the Union of Soviet Republics, welcomes, on behalf of the workers and peasants of Azerbaijan, the entry of the Transcaucasian Federation into the integrated Union of Soviet Republics, and hereby confirms all the measures taken by the Presidium of the Azerbaijan Central Executive Committee in this direction. The session is sending the warmest greetings to the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets and expresses its firm confidence that it, meeting within the walls of proletarian Baku, will, by its work, further reinforce the Transcaucasian Federation, lay the ground for the closest possible association with the fraternal Soviet Republics and issue a resounding appeal for the liberation of working people and oppressed masses of the East.

Long live the Transcaucasian Federation, advancing from strength to strength!

Long live the Union of Soviet Republics!

Long live the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets!

9 December 1922

*Bakinsky rabochy* (Baku Worker),  
December 10, 1922

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST TRANSCAUCASIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON THE REPORT ON THE UNION OF SOCIALIST  
SOVIET REPUBLICS**

The Union of Socialist Republics is to be formed by the following Republics: the RSFSR, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and the Transcaucasian Federation comprising Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The Republics of the RSFSR, the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Federation are merging to form a single federal state to be known as the "Union of Socialist Soviet Republics", with each of these republics reserving the right of free secession from the Union. The Congress of Soviets of the Union, and, in-between the Congresses, the Central Executive Committee, shall be the supreme authority of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The Congress of Soviets, the Central Executive Committee of the Union of the Contracting Republics must be represented in proportion to the population, with minority rights guaranteed.

13 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 481

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST TRANSCAUCASIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
**ON CALLING THE GENERAL CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS**

The First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets considers it necessary to call a general congress of the Socialist Soviet Republics. The Transcaucasian Congress resolves to delegate its representatives to this Congress, empowered to sign the Treaty establishing the Union of the Republics.

13 December 1922

*I Zakavkazskiy Syezd Sovietov* (1st  
Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets),  
1923, p. 147

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SEVENTH ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

**ON THE ALL-UNION CONGRESS AND  
ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO IT**

Considering the consent expressed by the governments of the fraternal republics of the RSFSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the Federation of Transcaucasian Socialist Soviet Republics to an All-Union congress being called to draft and endorse the fundamentals of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies resolves:

1. To elect delegates from among those attending this Congress to the Constituent Congress of Soviets of the Union Republics, appropriate in number to the electoral quota established by Article 25 of the Constitution of the RSFSR now in force.

2. To call on the Congresses of Soviets of the Union Republics: a) to time the All-Union Congress to coincide with the closing of the All-Russia Congress of Soviets; b) to elect the delegates to the Congress on the basis of elections to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets.

3. To vest the delegates elected to the All-Russia Congress with authority on behalf of the Ukrainian SSR to draft and endorse the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

14 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 166

APPEAL  
OF THE FOURTH ALL-BYELORUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS TO THE WORKING PEOPLE  
OF BYELORUSSIA

*(Excerpt)*

*To all the working people of Byelorussia*

Workers, peasants, Red Armymen!

The All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies is meeting for the fourth time.

Only four years have passed since the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia was established. These have been four years of hard and persistent struggle for the power of the working people, against capitalists and landlords.

Soviet Byelorussia, in close union with the working people of all the other Soviet Republics, has stood solid and fast throughout these four years on guard of the Revolution's gains, striving by every means to consolidate the alliance of the workers and peasants.

Much of this time has been taken up by direct confrontation with the armed bourgeoisie. Polish landlords, supported by foreign capitalists, have time and again attempted to take the revolutionary gains away from the workers and peasants—to take the land away from the peasants and return the factories to their former owners.

Supported by the workers and peasants of the fraternal Soviet Republics, supported by our glorious Red Army, the workers and peasants of Byelorussia have defeated all the attempts of the world bour-

geoisie to push us back into the yoke of capital. For only one year the working people of Byelorussia have been able to devote themselves to peaceful labour. Yet even at this point one can note major achievements both in the field of industry and that of renascent agriculture.

The Revolution has yet a hard and difficult road to travel. Our enemies have not put up, nor can they put up with the existence of a Soviet Federation. Powerless, they have no more than suspended their struggle against us.

Land-grabbing ambitions have always been alien to the Soviet Republics. Desirous of throwing every ounce of their energy into rebuilding the war-ravaged national economy, they called on Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Romania to get down to actual disarmament.

Our neighbours, while paying lip-service to disarmament and reduction of army strength, have virtually refused to pass from words to deeds.

Let all working men of the Republic always remember this. Let every worker, every peasant remember that our neighbours keep their armies ready and that our Red Army must also be ready.

In all it does, Soviet Byelorussia has always moved in step with all the other fraternal Soviet Republics. They fought together on the fronts. They worked together to rebuild our wrecked economy.

The Congress will, beyond all doubt, take into account the international situation which has now emerged, and the adamant decision of the workers and peasants of all the Soviet Republics to continue their common struggle and will, by its resolutions, further strengthen the bonds of brotherhood linking the working people of all the Soviet Republics.

14 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, pp. 302-03

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FOURTH ALL-BYELORUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION  
OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS**

*(Excerpt)*

The Fourth All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies considers that the proposal of the All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets for immediately formalising the actually

existing Union of Soviet Republics, thereby uniting, against the joint front of world capitalism, the forces of the workers and peasants of all the Soviet Republics on the basis of mutual equality and close political and economic community and, at the same time, ensuring independent national-cultural development and creating the necessary guarantees of economic initiative, for each of the members, corresponds to the vital interests of Soviet Byelorussia and therefore must be effected promptly at the forthcoming Congress of all the Soviet Republics.

The Fourth Congress of Soviets of Byelorussia expresses its profound assurance that the Congress of the RSFSR, together with the representatives of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Republics, will create a well-built alliance of the working people of all the fraternal republics, and hereby instructs its delegation, being elected to attend the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, to give solemn pledge during the deliberations of the Congress and perform the formal acts establishing the fraternal Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

18 December 1922

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 2,  
1960, p. 304

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE TENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
ON THE REPORT ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

1. To acknowledge as well-timed the unification of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. The unification shall be based on the principle of voluntary accession and equal rights of the Republics, each of them reserving the right of free secession from the Union of Republics.

3. To instruct the delegation to draft, together with the delegations of the Ukraine, the Transcaucasian Republic and Byelorussia, a declaration on the formation of the Union of Republics, laying down the circumstances prescribing the unification of the Republics into a single federal state.

4. To instruct the delegation to work out the conditions on which the RSFSR is to enter the Union of Republics, and call on it to adhere to the following provisions in considering the Treaty of Union:

a) the formation of appropriate Union legislative and executive bodies;

b) the merger of the People's Commissariats of the Navy, Railways, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, and Post and Telegraph;

c) subordination of the People's Commissariats of Finance, Food, National Economy, Labour, and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Contracting Republics to the directives of the corresponding Commissariats of the Union of Republics;

d) full safeguards for the interests of the ethnic development of the peoples of the Contracting Republics.

5. To submit the draft Treaty, prior to bringing it before the First Congress of the Union of Republics, to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, through its Presidium, for approval.

6. To empower the delegation, on the basis of the approval of the merger terms by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, to conclude a Treaty between the RSFSR and the socialist Soviet Republics of the Ukraine, the Transcaucasia and Byelorussia on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

7. To submit the Treaty to the First Congress of the Union of Republics for approval.

27 December 1922

*Sobraniye uzakoneniye RSFSR*, 1923,  
No. 28, Item 325

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

**ON APPROVING THE DECLARATION  
AND TREATY ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

The Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, having considered the draft Declaration on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Treaty of Union, concluded by the plenipotentiary delegations elected by the Congresses of Soviets of the RSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR, the Transcaucasian SFSR and the Byelorussian SSR, *resolves*:

1. The Declaration and the Treaty of Union shall hereby be basically endorsed.

2. In view of the extraordinary importance of the Declaration thus adopted and the Treaty hereby concluded and the desirability of hear-

ing the final opinion of all republics forming part of the Union of Republics on the text of the Present Treaty, the Declaration and the Treaty shall be referred to the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics for additional hearing so that the comments of the Union Republics could be submitted to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR at its next regular session.

3. The next regular session of the CEC of the USSR shall be called upon to consider the comments received, endorse the text of the Declaration and the Treaty of Union and put it into effect forthwith.

4. The Central Executive Committee of the USSR shall be called upon to prepare the final text of the Declaration and the Treaty of Union by the time the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union meets and submit it to the Second Congress for final approval.

30 December 1922

*Postanovleniya pervogo Syezda Sovietov  
Soyuza Sovietskikh Sotsialisticheskikh  
Respublik* (Resolutions of the First  
Congress of Soviets of the Union of  
Soviet Socialist Republics), published by  
the Central Executive Committee of the  
USSR, 1923, p. 8

**DECLARATION  
OF THE FIRST CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF THE USSR  
ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

Since the establishment of the Soviet Republics, the nations of the world have divided into two camps: the camp of capitalism and the camp of socialism.

Over there, in the camp of capitalism, there is national enmity and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism, national oppression and pogroms, imperialist atrocities and wars.

Here, in the camp of socialism, there is mutual trust and peace, national freedom and equality, peaceful coexistence and fraternal cooperation of the peoples.

The attempts of the capitalist world over scores of years to resolve the issue of national relations by combining free development of the peoples with the system of exploitation of man by man have proved futile. On the contrary, the tangle of national contradictions is building up, threatening as it does the very existence of capitalism. The bourgeoisie has been powerless to develop cooperation of the peoples.

It is only in the camp of Soviets, only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which has the majority of the population rallying round it, that it has proved possible to eradicate national oppression, create a climate of mutual confidence and lay the ground for the fraternal cooperation of the peoples.

It was only due to these circumstances that the Soviet Republics succeeded in beating back the attacks of the imperialists of the whole world, both internal and external; it was only due to these circumstances that they succeeded in effectively ending the Civil War, ensuring their existence and launching on peaceful economic endeavour.

But the years of war have not passed without a trace. Ravaged fields, factories brought to a standstill, decimated productive forces and depleted economic resources—all the legacy of the war, make the isolated efforts of the individual republics to promote economic growth insufficient. It has proved impossible to restore the national economy as long as the republics exist separately.

On the other hand, the instability of the international situation and the danger of new attacks make it inevitable in the face of capitalist encirclement to create a united front of the Soviet Republics.

Finally, the very structure of Soviet power, internationalist by its class essence, is prompting the working masses of the Soviet Republics to unite within a single socialist commonwealth.

All these circumstances make it imperative for the Soviet Republics to unite within a single federal state capable of ensuring both external security and internal economic advance and the freedom of ethnic development.

The will of the peoples of the Soviet Republics, who recently assembled at Congresses of their Soviets and unanimously voted to set up the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", is a true earnest that this Union is a voluntary association of peoples with equal rights, that each Republic is ensured freedom of secession from the Union, that the Union is open to all socialist Soviet Republics, both those which already exist and those yet to arise, and that the new federal state will worthily crown the foundations of peaceful coexistence and fraternal cooperation of the peoples laid back in October 1917, that it will serve as a sure bulwark against world capitalism and a further major step forward towards uniting the working people of all lands in a World Socialist Soviet Republic.

Declaring all this in front of the whole world and solemnly proclaiming the immutability of the foundations of Soviet power, as expressed in the Constitutions of the Socialist Soviet Republics, which have empowered us, we, the delegates of these republics, exercising the

powers given to us, do hereby resolve to sign the Treaty establishing the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics".

30 December 1922

*Postanovleniya Pervogo Syezda Sovietov  
Soyuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh  
Respublik, 1923, pp. 1-4*

TREATY  
ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkSSR), the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic (BSSR) and the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR—Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia) do hereby conclude the present Treaty of Union to form one federal state—the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*—under the following terms.

1. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, through the agency of its supreme bodies, shall have jurisdiction over:

- a) the Union's representation in international relations;
- b) changing of the Union's outer frontiers;
- c) conclusion of treaties to admit new republics to the Union;
- d) declaration of war and conclusion of peace;
- e) contraction of external state loans;
- f) ratification of international treaties;
- g) establishment of the systems of foreign and home trade;
- h) laying down the fundamentals and the general plan for the national economy of the Union as well as conclusion of concessionary treaties;
- i) regulation of transport and postal and telegraph services;
- j) laying down the fundamental principles of the organisation of the Armed Forces of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;
- k) endorsement of a consolidated state Budget of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, institution of a coin, a monetary and a credit system as well as of a system of all-Union, republican and local taxation;
- l) laying down the common fundamental principles to govern organisation of land use and land tenure as well as the use of mineral wealth, forests and waters throughout the territory of the Union;
- m) general Union legislation on resettlement;
- n) laying down the fundamental principles of the judiciary and

legal procedure as well as those of the Civil and Criminal codes of the Union;

- o) promulgation of fundamental labour legislation;
- p) laying down the common basic principles of public education;
- q) enactment of common measures to protect the health of the people;
- r) laying down a system of measures and weights;
- s) organisation of all-Union statistics;
- t) fundamental legislation concerning federal citizenship in respect of the rights of foreigners;
- u) the right of general amnesty;
- v) repeal of the ordinances of Congresses of Soviets, Central Executive Committees and Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics, violating the Treaty of Union.

2. The supreme organ of state power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and, in the periods between Congresses—the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

3. The Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be made up of representatives of the city Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 25,000 electors and of representatives of the gubernia congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 125,000 inhabitants.

4. Delegates to the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be elected at gubernia congresses of Soviets.

5. Statutory Congresses of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be convened by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics once a year; extraordinary Congresses shall be convened by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at its discretion or at the bidding of at least two of the Union Republics.

6. The Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall elect a 371-member Central Executive Committee to be formed of representatives of the Union Republics in proportion to the population of each of them.

7. Statutory sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be convened three times a year. Extraordinary sessions shall be convened upon the decision of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union or at the bidding of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as well as that of the Central Executive Committee of one of the Union Republics.

8. The Congresses of Soviets and sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be convened in the capitals of the Union Republics in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

9. The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall elect a Presidium which is the supreme organ of power of the Union in-between sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union.

10. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall consist of 19 elected members, of these the Central Executive Committee of the Union shall elect four chairmen of the Central Executive Committee of the Union according to the number of Union Republics.

11. The Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the executive body of the Central Executive Committee of the Union. It shall be elected by the Central Executive Committee of the Union for a term corresponding to the latter's term and be composed as follows:

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union;  
Vice-Chairmen;

People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs;

People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs;

People's Commissar of Foreign Trade;

People's Commissar of Railways;

People's Commissar of Post and Telegraph;

People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection;

Chairman of the Supreme National Economic Council;

People's Commissar of Labour;

People's Commissar of Food;

People's Commissar of Finance.

12. With a view to establishing revolutionary law and order on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and pooling the efforts of the Union Republics in combating counter-revolution, a Supreme Court shall be established under the auspices of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with functions of supreme judicial control, and an amalgamated agency of the State Political Administration under the auspices of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union, its Chairman being on board of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union with advisory powers.

13. Decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be binding on all the

Union Republics and enforceable directly throughout the territory of the Union.

14. Decrees and ordinances of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union shall be published in the languages commonly used in the Union Republics (Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Georgian, Armenian, Turkic).

15. The Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics may lodge protest against decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union in the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, without suspending their execution.

16. Decisions and instructions of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be rescinded only by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its Presidium; while instructions of individual People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be rescinded by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, its Presidium and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union.

17. The instructions of the People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be suspended by Central Executive Committees or Presidiums of Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics only in exceptional cases, given manifest inconsistency of a particular instruction with the decisions of the Council of People's Commissars or the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Central Executive Committee or the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union Republics shall immediately report suspension of an instruction to the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the respective People's Commissar of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

18. The Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics shall consist of:

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars;

Vice-Chairman;

Chairman of the Supreme National Economic Council;

People's Commissar of Agriculture;

People's Commissar of Food;

People's Commissar of Finance;

People's Commissar of Labour;

People's Commissar of the Interior;

People's Commissar of Justice;

People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection;

People's Commissar of Education;  
People's Commissar of Health;  
People's Commissar of Social Security;  
People's Commissar of Nationalities, as well as representatives with advisory powers of the People's Commissariats of the Union of: Foreign Affairs, Military and Naval Affairs, Foreign Trade, Railways, Post and Telegraph.

19. The Supreme National Economic Council and the People's Commissariats of: Food, Finance, Labour, and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Union Republics, while being directly subordinate to the Central Executive Committees and the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics, shall guide themselves in their activities by the instructions of the respective People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

20. The Republics within the Union shall have their own Budgets which form part of the National Budget, endorsed by the Central Executive Committee of the Union. The republican Budgets shall be under revenue and expenditure ledgers, by the Central Executive Committee of the Union. The list of the revenue and the size of revenue deductions forming the Budgets of the Union Republics shall be determined by the Central Executive Committee of the Union.

21. Uniform federal citizenship shall be instituted for the citizens of the Union Republics.

22. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall have its flag, emblem and Seal of the State.

23. The City of Moscow shall be the capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

24. The Union Republics shall amend their respective Constitutions in accordance with the present Treaty.

25. Approval of, amendment and addenda to the Treaty of Union shall be the exclusive prerogative of the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

26. Each of the Union Republics shall retain freedom of secession from the Union.

30 December 1922

*Postanovleniya pervogo Syezda Sovietov  
Soyuza Sovietskikh Sotsialisticheskikh  
Respublik, 1923, pp. 4-7*

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
(FIRST CONVOCATION)

**ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL  
OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*(Excerpt)*

*V. I. Ulyanov (Lenin)* shall hereby be confirmed as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. . . .

6 July 1923

*Vestnik TsIK, SNK i STO Soyuz SSR.*  
(Bulletin of the Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), 1923, No. 2, Item 52

RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE USSR

**ON THE APPEAL OF THE PRESIDUM  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE USSR  
TO ALL THE PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD**

Ever since the Soviet Republics came into existence, they have been united by a relationship of close cooperation and mutual assistance which has subsequently assumed the form of Treaties of Union. The power of workers and peasants brought them together within one entity by the common requirements of struggle against being attacked by capitalist states from outside and against internal encroachments of the counter-revolution on the Soviet system. The solidarity of the working people has united them in the common cause of establishing the fraternal cooperation of the liberated peoples. They have emerged together from the victorious proletarian revolution which has overthrown the rule of the landlords and capitalists. Together, they have had to stand the hard historical test of intervention and blockade and stood it they have victoriously. Together, they have got down to the sweeping job of rebuilding the national economy on the basis of the new economic system, after having experienced unheard-of calamities.

While lending each other constant fraternal assistance by all their means and resources, they have, nevertheless, remained separate as states for quite a long time, although bound together by Treaties of Union.

The subsequent development of their mutual relations and the requirements of the international situation have now brought them to the point of uniting together within a single federal state.

The intensification of world reaction and of the aggressive designs of imperialist governments and the danger thus created of new attacks make inevitable the amalgamation of the defence forces of all the Soviet Republics in the hands of one federal centre.

At the same time, the economic development effort in the Soviet Republics devastated by the war, intervention and blockade, will be an insurmountable problem unless they pool their efforts, and can be resolved effectively only under planned leadership from a single economic centre of the entire Union.

The very nature of the workers' and peasants' government, given the progressive development and consolidation of the new system in the Soviet Republics, has been increasingly inducing them to unite and to join their efforts in pursuit of the common goal.

At the recent Congresses of their Soviets, the peoples of the Soviet Republics unanimously decided to form the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as one federal state. This association of peoples with equal rights is voluntary, precluding national oppression and compulsion of any people to stay within the limits of this state, leaving each republic the right to secede from the Union and, at the same time, keeping it open for the voluntary accession by all socialist Soviet Republics, including those yet to arise.

On 6 July the Declaration and the Treaty adopted by the Soviet Republics, which joined the Union, have been endorsed and enacted by the Central Executive Committee of the Union.

In view of the need for the Soviet Republics to pool their forces for defence against attacks from the outside, an integrated All-Union military and naval People's Commissariat shall be set up.

In view of the community of the objectives and requirements of the Soviet Republics in the face of the capitalist states, an integrated All-Union People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs has been established.

The need for full centralisation of foreign trade, on the basis of a state monopoly, and for the defence of the Soviet Republics against the attempts of capitalist states at subjecting them, has compelled them to set up a single All-Union People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade.

The planned development of the national economy requires them

to unify transport services and lines of communication, i.e., create an All-Union People's Commissariat of Railways and a People's Commissariat of Post and Telegraph.

Other areas of state activity in the Union Republics are subordinate, in part, to the Union centres, with each of the Republics retaining its own centre as well, and, in part, remain exclusively in the hands of individual republics.

Direct management of the national economy and finance, the organisation of food supplies, state defence of the rights and interests of wage labour and the exercise of control over the whole machinery of State by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection shall be, concurrently, in the hands of an all-Union centre, because they need to be directed from a single centre, and individual centres in each particular Union Republic, on the territory of which there has to be special leadership for each of them.

The Commissariats which have special national tasks and deal with everyday national relations and specific matters such as education, agriculture, the interior, justice and so on, shall exist solely in the Union Republics under their undivided control.

The unity of the will of the working masses of the entire Union expresses itself in its supreme organ, the All-Union Congress of Soviets, with each nationality being simultaneously granted the right of special representation in the Soviet of Nationalities which shall cooperate, on an equal footing, with the Soviet of the Union to be elected by the Congress.

The federal State, thus created on the basis of the fraternal cooperation of the peoples of the Soviet Republics, is setting itself the aim of keeping the peace with all the peoples. The nationalities with equal rights will work together in close cooperation, hand in hand, promoting their culture and well-being and carrying out the tasks set by the working people's power.

Being as it is a natural ally of oppressed peoples, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is seeking peaceful and friendly relations and economic cooperation with all peoples. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics aims to contribute towards promoting the interests of the working people of the whole world. Over vast expanses from the Baltic, Black and White seas all the way to the Pacific Ocean it is translating into practice the fraternity between the peoples and the reign of labour, determined at the same time to promote the friendly cooperation of the peoples of the whole world.

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE USSR**

**ON INFORMING ALL CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES  
OF THE UNION REPUBLICS OF THE FUNCTIONING  
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE USSR**

This is to notify you that the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, elected by the first session of the CEC of the USSR, has started to function in accordance with the powers conferred on it by the second session of the CEC of the USSR, as the supreme organ of authority of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in conformity with Chapter 5 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

13 July 1923

*Vestnik TsIK, SNK i STO Soyuz  
SSR, 1923, No. 1, Item 11*

Chapter VI

**THE 1924 CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR AND  
THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE UNION REPUBLICS**

RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD SESSION  
OF THE ALL-UKRAINE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
(SEVENTH CONVOCATION)

**ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR**

Having heard the report on the formation of the Union and on the Union Constitution, and also the draft Union Constitution, the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee has resolved:

The aforesaid draft Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is to be approved in full.

2 July 1923

*Sobraniye uzakonenyi UkSSR, 1923,  
No. 45, Item 572*

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
(FIRST CONVOCATION)

**ON PUTTING INTO FORCE THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

1. The Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is to be adopted and immediately put into force.

2. The text of the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics adopted at this session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is to be submitted to the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for final endorsement.

3. Until the formation of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the basis of Chapters 4 and 5 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Soci-

alist Republics, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics elected at the First Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on 30 December 1922, consisting of 19 members, shall assume the powers vested in the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by the Constitution.

6 July 1923

*Osnovnoy Zakon (Konstitutsia) Soyuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik* (Fundamental Law [Constitution] of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), published by the CEC of the USSR, 1924

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND ALL-GEORGIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS**

**ON THE REPORT ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR**

Having heard the report on the Constitution of the USSR, the Second All-Georgia Congress approves the Constitution and instructs all bodies and institutions of the Republic to abide strictly by this Constitution.

3 January 1924

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 6, 1964, p. 491

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND TRANSCAUCASIAN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS**

**ON THE CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE USSR**

Having heard the report on the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, the Second Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Red Army and Sailors' Deputies approves (ratifies) it and instructs all the state institutions and bodies of the TSFSR to be guided by the requirements of this Constitution in their activity.

5 January 1924

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 6, 1964, p. 30

RESOLUTION  
OF THE ELEVENTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON THE ADOPTION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW  
(CONSTITUTION) OF THE USSR**

The Eleventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets *has resolved*:

To approve the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics adopted on 6 July 1923 at the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (First Convocation), and to notify the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics accordingly.

29 January 1924

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1924,  
No. 27, Item 257

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE ADOPTION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW (CONSTITUTION)  
OF THE USSR**

Having heard the report on the adoption of the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Second Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics resolves:

To approve the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted for final endorsement, in accordance with the resolution of the First Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with the following amendments:

In the notes to Article 15, after the words "South Ossetia" add "Nagorny Karabakh and Nakhichevan".

To Article 26 add: "For the formation of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in accordance with Articles 26 and 37 of this Constitution, a joint session of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall be held. At the joint session of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities voting shall take place separately in the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities."

31 January 1924

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 3,  
1960, p. 40

## FUNDAMENTAL LAW (CONSTITUTION) OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, solemnly proclaiming the inviolability of the foundations of Soviet power, in pursuance of the resolution of the First Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and on the basis of the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics adopted at the First Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the city of Moscow on 30 December 1922, and taking into consideration the amendments and changes proposed by the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics, *has resolved:*

That the Declaration on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics constitute the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

### Part One

#### DECLARATION ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Since the formation of the Soviet Republics the states of the world have split into two camps: the camp of capitalism and the camp of socialism.

There, in the camp of capitalism, there reign national enmity and inequality, colonial bondage and chauvinism, national oppression and pogroms, imperialist brutality and wars.

Here, in the camp of socialism, there reign mutual trust and peace, national freedom and equality, peaceful coexistence and fraternal cooperation of the peoples.

The attempts by the capitalist world over the decades to resolve the national question through a combination of the free development of the peoples and the system of exploitation of man by man, have proved futile. On the contrary, the knot of national contradictions is becoming increasingly entangled, threatening the very existence of capitalism. The bourgeoisie proved powerless to organise cooperation between the peoples.

Only in the camp of the Soviets, only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, which has rallied around itself the overwhelming majority of the population, has it been possible to eliminate national oppression completely, create a situation of mutual trust, and lay the foundation for fraternal cooperation of the peoples.

Only thanks to these circumstances were the Soviet Republics able to counter the attacks of the imperialists of the whole world, both domestic and foreign; only thanks to these circumstances were they able successfully to end the Civil War, ensure their existence and begin peaceful economic construction.

But the war years have left their mark. The ruined fields, shut-down factories, destroyed productive forces and exhausted economic resources inherited from the war render insufficient separate efforts by individual Republics to build the economy. It has proved impossible to restore the national economy while the Republics exist separately.

On the other hand, the instability of the international situation and the threat of new attacks necessitate the creation of a united front of the Soviet Republics in the face of the capitalist encirclement.

Finally, the very structure of Soviet power, which is international by its class nature, prompts the masses of working people of the Soviet Republics to take the road of uniting in one socialist family.

All these circumstances make it imperative for the Soviet Republics to unite in a federal state that is capable of ensuring both the security of its frontiers and economic advance on the home front, and the free national development of the peoples.

The will of the peoples of the Soviet Republics, who recently convened the congresses of their Soviets and unanimously adopted a decision on the formation of the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics", is a reliable guarantee that this Union is a voluntary association of equal peoples, that each Republic is ensured the right to free secession from the Union, that access to the Union is open to all socialist Soviet Republics, both the existing ones and those that will appear in the future; that the new federal state is a fitting culmination of the peaceful cohabitation and fraternal cooperation of the peoples, the foundation for which was laid in October 1917; that it will serve as a reliable bulwark against world capitalism and a new decisive step on the way to uniting the working people of all countries in a World Socialist Soviet Republic.

## **Part Two**

### **TREATY ON THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkSSR), the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic (BSSR) and the Transcaucasian Socialist Fede-

rative Soviet Republic (TSFSR: the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia and the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia) shall unite into a single federal state—the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*.

## Chapter One

### ON THE JURISDICTION OF THE HIGHER BODIES OF POWER OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

1. The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies, shall extend to:

(a) representation of the USSR in international relations, the conduct of all diplomatic relations, conclusion of political and other treaties with other states;

(b) approval of changes in the boundaries of the Union, and regulation of changes to boundaries between the Union Republics;

(c) conclusion of agreements on admission of new Republics into the Union;

(d) declaration of war and conclusion of peace;

(e) conclusion of foreign and domestic loans of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and granting permission for foreign and domestic loans to the Union Republics;

(f) ratification of international treaties;

(g) direction of foreign trade and establishment of a domestic trade system;

(h) establishment of the basis and general plan for the national economy, definition of branches of industry and individual industrial enterprises of all-Union significance, conclusion of concessionary agreements, both all-Union and in the name of the Union Republics;

(i) administration of transport and communications;

(j) organisation and direction of the armed forces of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(k) approval of a consolidated state Budget of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which includes the budgets of the Union Republics; determination of all-Union taxes and other revenues, the deductions from them and the increments, which go to form the state budgets of the Union Republics, granting permission for additional taxation and revenue for the formation of budgets of the Union Republics;

(l) establishment of a single monetary and credit system;

(m) definition of basic principles of land tenure and land use, and of the use of minerals, forests and waters in the whole territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(n) uniform Union legislation on inter-republican migration and the establishment of a migration fund;

(o) definition of the fundamentals of the judiciary system and judicial procedure and of the civil and criminal legislation of the Union;

(p) definition of the fundamentals of labour legislation;

(q) definition of the basic principles of public education;

(r) definition of common measures for people's health care;

(s) establishment of a system of weights and measures;

(t) organisation of a uniform system of national statistics;

(u) fundamental legislation in the sphere of Union citizenship with respect to the rights of foreigners;

(v) promulgation of all-Union acts of amnesty;

(w) suspension of decisions of Congresses of Soviets and Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics which do not conform to this Constitution;

(x) settlement of disputes arising between the Union Republics.

2. Endorsement and amendment of the basic principles of this Constitution shall be the exclusive prerogative of the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## Chapter Two

### ON THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF THE UNION REPUBLICS AND ON FEDERAL CITIZENSHIP

3. The sovereignty of the Union Republics shall be restricted only within the limits set by this Constitution, and only on matters that lie within Union jurisdiction. Beyond these limits each Union Republic shall exercise its state power independently. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall safeguard the sovereign rights of the Union Republics.

4. Each Union Republic shall retain the right to free secession from the Union.

5. The Union Republics shall amend their constitutions in accordance with this Constitution.

6. The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent, and any restrictions to, changes or abrogation of, Article 4 shall require the consent of all the Republics comprising the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

7. A uniform federal citizenship shall be established for the citizens of the Union Republics.

### Chapter Three

#### ON THE CONGRESS OF SOVIETS OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

8. The supreme body of power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the Congress of Soviets, and in the period between the Congresses of Soviets—the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics consisting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

9. The Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall consist of representatives of city and town Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 25,000 electors, and representatives of gubernia Congresses of Soviets on the basis of one deputy per 125,000 inhabitants.

10. Delegates to the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be elected at gubernia Congresses of Soviets. In Republics where there are no gubernias, delegates shall be elected directly at the Congress of Soviets of the given Republic.

11. Statutory Congresses of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be convened by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics once a year; extraordinary Congresses shall be convened by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at its own discretion, at the request of the Soviet of the Union, the Soviet of Nationalities or at the request of two Union Republics.

12. In extraordinary circumstances which prohibit the timely convening of a Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the right to postpone convening the Congress shall be vested in the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

### Chapter Four

#### ON THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

13. The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall consist of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

14. The Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall elect the Soviet of the Union from representatives of the Union Republics in proportion to the population of each Republic, consisting of 414 members in all.

15. The Soviet of Nationalities shall be formed of representatives of Union and Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics—five representa-

tives each, and of representatives of the Autonomous Regions of the RSFSR—one representative each. The composition of the Soviet of Nationalities as a whole shall be endorsed by the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*Note.* The Autonomous Republics: Ajaria and Abkhasia, and the Autonomous Regions—South Ossetia, Nagorny Karabakh and Nakhichevan—shall send one representative each to the Soviet of Nationalities.

16. The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall consider all decrees, codes and decisions submitted by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, individual People's Commissariats of the Union, and Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics, as well as those initiated by the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

17. The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall issue codes, decrees, decisions and ordinances, coordinate work on the legislation and administration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and determine the sphere of activity of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

18. All decrees and decisions which determine the general norms of political and economic life of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and also introduce fundamental changes in the existing practice of the state bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be necessarily submitted to the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for consideration and endorsement.

19. All decrees, decisions and ordinances issued by the Central Executive Committee shall be binding throughout the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

20. The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be empowered to suspend or revoke decrees, decisions and ordinances of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and of Congresses of Soviets and Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics and other bodies of power in the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

21. Regular sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be convened by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee three times a year. Extraordinary sessions shall be convened on the initiative of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

lics, at the request of the Presidium of the Soviet of the Union or the Presidium of the Soviet of Nationalities, and also at the request of the Central Executive Committee of a Union Republic.

22. Bills submitted for consideration by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall attain the force of law only if they are adopted both by the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities and are issued in the name of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

23. In the event of disagreement between the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities the matter at issue shall be referred to a conciliation commission formed by them.

24. If agreement is not reached in the conciliation commission, the matter shall be considered at a joint sitting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, and if a majority is not reached in the Soviet of the Union or the Soviet of Nationalities, the matter may, at the request of one of these bodies, be referred to a regular or extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

25. The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall elect their Presidiums, consisting of seven members each, for the preparation of their sittings and guidance of the latter's work.

26. In the period between sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the supreme body of power shall be the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics formed by the Central Executive Committee and consisting of 21 members, to include the full composition of the Presidiums of the Soviet of the Union and of the Soviet of Nationalities.

For the formation of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Articles 26 and 37 of this Constitution), joint sittings of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall be held. Voting at a joint sitting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall be conducted separately by the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

27. The Central Executive Committee shall elect in conformity with the number of Union Republics four Chairmen of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from the members of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

28. The Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be accountable to the Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## Chapter Five

### ON THE PRESIDIUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

29. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the period between sessions of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the supreme legislative, executive and administrative body of power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

30. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall ensure the observance of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and fulfilment of all decisions of the Congress of Soviets and the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics by all bodies of authority.

31. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be empowered to suspend and revoke decisions of the Council of People's Commissars and individual People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Central Executive Committees and the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics.

32. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be empowered to suspend the decisions of Congresses of Soviets of the Union Republics, with subsequent submission of these decisions for consideration and endorsement by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

33. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall issue decrees, decisions and ordinances and consider and endorse draft decrees and decisions submitted by the Council of People's Commissars, individual departments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics, their Presidiums and other bodies of authority.

34. Decrees and decisions of the Central Executive Committee, its Presidium and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be issued in the languages in common use in the Union Republics (Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Georgian, Armenian, Turko-Tatar).

35. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall resolve questions dealing with relations between the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People's Commissariats of the

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on the one hand, and the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics and their Presidiums, on the other.

36. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be accountable to the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## Chapter Six

### ON THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

37. The Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the executive and administrative body of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, shall be formed by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and shall consist of:

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

Vice-Chairmen;

People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs;

People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs;

People's Commissar for Foreign Trade;

People's Commissar for Railways;

People's Commissar for Post and Telegraph;

People's Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection;

Chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy;

People's Commissar for Labour;

People's Commissar for Food;

People's Commissar for Finance.

38. The Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, within the powers vested in it by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and on the basis of the Statute on the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, shall issue decrees and decisions that are binding throughout the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

39. The Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall consider decrees and decisions submitted both by individual People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and by the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics and their Presidiums.

40. The Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be accountable in all its work to the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its Presidium.

41. The decisions and ordinances of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be suspended and revoked by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its Presidium.

42. The Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics and their Presidiums may appeal the decrees and decisions of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics without suspending their implementation.

## Chapter Seven

### ON THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

43. With the aim of establishing revolutionary law and order throughout the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, there shall be established under the auspices of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics a Supreme Court, whose competence extends to:

(a) instruction of the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics on all-Union legislation;

(b) consideration and appeal before the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, at the recommendation of the Procurator of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, of decisions, resolutions and sentences of the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics when they run counter to all-Union legislation, or inasmuch as they concern the interests of other republics;

(c) ruling on the constitutionality of decisions of the Union Republics at the request of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(d) settlement of court disputes between the Union Republics;

(e) examination of cases of higher federal officials accused of malfeasance.

44. The Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall act in the composition of:

(a) a plenary session of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(b) civil and criminal court collegiums of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(c) military and military-transport collegiums.

45. A plenary session of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be formed of 11 members, including the Chairman and his Deputy, four Chairmen of plenary sessions of the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics and one representative of the Joint State Political Department of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; the Chairman and his Deputy and the five other members shall be appointed by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

46. The Procurator of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and his Deputy shall be appointed by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Procurator of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be charged with ruling on all questions within the competence of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, backing the prosecution in session and, in the event of disagreement with the rulings of the plenary session of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, appealing them to the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

47. The right to submit matters stated in Article 43 for hearing at a plenary session of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the exclusive prerogative of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, its Presidium, the Procurator of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Procurators of the Union Republics and the Joint State Political Department of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

48. The plenary sessions of the Supreme Court shall form special courts to hear:

(a) criminal and civil cases of exceptional importance, which concern two or several Union Republics, and

(b) cases dealing with the personal incrimination of members of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acceptance of these cases by the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be permissible solely on the basis of a special decision in each case by the Central Executive Committee of the Union or its Presidium.

## Chapter Eight

### ON THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIATS OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

49. For direct leadership of individual branches of state administration that come within the competence of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 10 People's Commissariats shall be formed, as indicated in Article 37 of this Constitution, acting on the basis of the Statutes on the People's Commissariats approved by the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

50. The People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be divided into:

(a) all-Union People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(b) joint People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

51. All-Union People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the People's Commissariats for:

Foreign Affairs;

Military and Naval Affairs;

Foreign Trade;

Railways;

Post and Telegraph.

52. Joint People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the People's Commissariats:

the Supreme Council of National Economy;

for Food;

for Labour;

for Finance; and

for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

53. All-Union People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall have their representatives in the Union Republics who are directly subordinated to them.

54. The bodies of the Joint People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which implement their tasks within the territory of the Union Republics, shall be the People's Commissariats of the same name of these republics.

55. The People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be headed by members of the Council of People's Commissars—People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

56. Attached to each People's Commissar, under his chairmanship,

shall be a collegium, whose members are appointed by the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

57. A People's Commissar shall be empowered personally to take decisions on all questions that come within the jurisdiction of the corresponding Commissariat, and shall notify the collegium accordingly. In case of disagreement with a decision of the People's Commissar, the collegium or its individual members, without suspending implementation of the decision, may lodge a complaint with the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

58. The orders of individual People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be revoked by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

59. The orders of People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be suspended by the Central Executive Committees or Presidiums of the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics if the order clearly does not conform to the Union Constitution, the legislation of the Union or the legislation of a Union Republic. On the suspension of an order the Central Executive Committees or Presidiums of the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics shall immediately notify the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the corresponding People's Commissar of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

60. The People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be accountable to the Council of People's Commissars, the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and its Presidium.

## Chapter Nine

### ON THE JOINT STATE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

61. With the aim of uniting the revolutionary efforts of the Union Republics in the struggle against the political and economic counter-revolution, espionage and banditism, the Joint State Political Department shall be set up under the auspices of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and its Chairman shall be a member of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with the right to a deliberative vote.

62. The Joint State Political Department of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall guide the work of the local bodies of the State Political Department through its representatives on the Councils

of People's Commissars of the Union Republics, acting on the basis of a special provision that is confirmed by corresponding legislation.

63. Supervision of the legality of the actions of the Joint State Political Department of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be exercised by the Procurator of the Supreme Court of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the basis of a special decision of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## Chapter Ten

### ON THE UNION REPUBLICS

64. Within the territory of each Union Republic, its supreme body of power shall be the Congress of Soviets of the Republic, and in the interval between congresses—its Central Executive Committee.

65. Relations between the supreme bodies of power of the Union Republics and the supreme bodies of power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be defined by this Constitution.

66. The Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics shall elect from among their numbers Presidium, which in the period between sessions of the Central Executive Committees are the highest bodies of authority.

67. The Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics shall form their executive bodies—Councils of People's Commissars which shall consist of:

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars;

Deputy Chairman;

Chairman of the Supreme Council of National Economy;

People's Commissar for Agriculture;

People's Commissar for Finance;

People's Commissar for Food;

People's Commissar for Labour;

People's Commissar for Internal Affairs;

People's Commissar for Justice;

People's Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection;

People's Commissar for Education;

People's Commissar for Health;

People's Commissar for Social Security,

and also, with the right to a deliberative or deciding vote, depending on the decision of the Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics—representatives of the People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for Foreign Affairs, for Military and Naval Affairs, for Foreign Trade, for Railways, for Post and Telegraph.

68. The Supreme Council of National Economy and the People's Commissariats for Food, Finance, Labour, and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection of the Union Republics shall be subordinate to the Central Executive Committees and Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics, and shall implement in their activity the directives of the corresponding People's Commissariats of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

69. The right of amnesty and the right of pardon and rehabilitation of citizens who have been sentenced by courts and administrative bodies of the Union Republics shall be the prerogative of the Central Executive Committees of these Republics.

### Chapter Eleven

#### ON THE EMBLEM, FLAG AND CAPITAL OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

70. The State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be a hammer and sickle on a globe depicted in the rays of the sun and framed by ears of wheat, with the inscription "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the six languages indicated in Article 34. At the top of the Emblem shall be a five-pointed star.

71. The State Flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be a rectangle of red cloth with a hammer and sickle depicted in gold in the upper corner next to the staff and with a five-pointed red star edged in gold above them. The ratio of the width of the flag to its length shall be 1:2.

72. The Capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be the city of Moscow.

Approved by the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR on 31 January 1924

*Osnovnoy Zakon (Konstitutsia) Soyuzo Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik (Fundamental Law [Constitution] of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), published by the CEC of the USSR, 1924*

**CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

**Part One**

**DECLARATION ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC**

The October Revolution of the proletariat of Russia, which liberated the working people from class oppression by the capitalists and big landowners, brought liberation also to the oppressed peoples of the former tsarist empire, granting them the right to self-determination, including secession. The ruling classes of Transcaucasia, personified in the bourgeois-landowner parties, taking advantage of this right to consolidate their political and economic domination and under the diktat of Germano-Turkish imperialism, first cut off Transcaucasia from worker-peasant Russia and formed the Transcaucasian Republic with a Sejm at its head, then partitioned the integral Transcaucasia into three parts, and dispersed to their national republics. Continuing, in alliance with the Russian counter-revolution and the imperialist Entente, a relentless struggle against Soviet power, the bourgeois-landowner ruling parties of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia plunged the people's masses of these countries into a bloody battle, setting them against one another and fomenting national enmity and division.

Only the revolutionary Soviet upheaval in the Transcaucasian Republics, which overthrew the domination of the oppressors and established worker-peasant power, brought the peoples of Transcaucasia national peace and paved the way for fraternal coexistence and joint struggle against the common enemy. On this basis the working people of the Transcaucasian Republics and the autonomous formations included in these Republics created the Federative Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia with the aim of working in a coordinated and planned manner to rehabilitate the economy, and for defence against the external and internal enemies.

This Union, continuing the cause of consolidating national peace and the further drawing together of the peoples of Transcaucasia on the principles of fraternal solidarity, yielded positive results in the economic sphere and in state construction. But bearing in mind the situation in the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics, which were affected by the economic boycott of the international bourgeoisie and were faced with the

threat of an incursion by imperialist powers, the working people of the Transcaucasian Republics considered further political, economic and military unity essential and timely. To this end the authorised representatives of all the Transcaucasian Republics, gathered at the first Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets, decided to form the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR).

True to the traditions and strivings of the working masses for solidarity and fraternal unity, the working people of Transcaucasia simultaneously solemnly declare before all the working people of the world that they are fully prepared, together with all the workers and peasants of the Soviet Republics, to create a joint Soviet front for common struggle against world capitalism.

Proceeding from this, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia, and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia) joins with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkSSR) and the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic (BSSR) to form a single federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

## **Part Two**

### **TREATY ON THE FORMATION OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC**

The Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic, the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia are uniting into one Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR).

Approved on 14 April 1925

Publication of the Transcaucasian Central Executive Committee, Tiflis, 1926

### **CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

1. This Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is based on the fundamental provisions of

the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People, adopted by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and the fundamental principles of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, adopted by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and has the task of guaranteeing the dictatorship of the proletariat which is aimed at suppressing the bourgeoisie, eliminating the exploitation of man by man and building communism under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

2. The Russian Republic is a socialist worker-peasant state built on the basis of a federation of national Soviet republics. All power within the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic belongs to the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks' and Red Army Deputies.

3. The bearer of the highest authority in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic is the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, and in the period between congresses, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

In accordance with the will of the peoples of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic who decided at the Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets to form the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, which forms part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, transfers to the federal bodies the prerogatives vested in them in conformity with Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

11. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic extends all rights granted by the Constitution and legislation of the Republic to the citizens of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic also to all citizens of other Union Soviet Republics living within the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, proceeding from the solidarity of the working people of all nations, extends all political rights to foreigners who reside on the territory of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic for the purpose of working and who belong to the working class or to the peasantry who do not exploit the labour of others, on the basis of decisions of the supreme bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

13. The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, proceeding from the equality of citizens irrespective of race or nationality, declares any oppression of national minorities or restriction of their equality, particularly the establishment or toleration of any (direct or indirect) privileges for individual nationalities, totally incompatible with the fundamental laws of the Republic, and recognises the right of individual nationalities to form autonomous Soviet socialist republics and regions

on the decision of their congresses of Soviets and with the approval of the supreme bodies of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Citizens of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic have the right to use their mother tongue freely at congresses, in court, in administrative matters and in social life. National minorities are ensured the right to study in their native language at school.

15. All the land, forests, minerals, waters, as well as factories and plants, rail, water and air transport and means of communication constitute the property of the worker-peasant state on the basis defined by special laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the highest bodies of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Approved on 11 May 1925

All-Russia Central Executive Committee  
Publishers, Moscow, 1925

## **FUNDAMENTAL LAW (CONSTITUTION) OF THE TURKMEN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

### *Article 1*

The main task of the Constitution of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic is to guarantee the dictatorship of the urban and aul proletariat on the basis of an alliance with the working dehkans for the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of communism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

The present Constitution proceeds from the basic principles of the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets and the Declaration on the Formation of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic approved by the latter's First Congress of Soviets.

### *Article 2*

The Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic is a free socialist state of the workers and dehkans of Turkmenistan.

### *Article 3*

All power within the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic belongs to the Soviets of Workers', Dehkans' and Red Army Deputies.

#### *Article 4*

The supreme body of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic is the All-Turkmenia Congress of Soviets and, in the interval between congresses, the Turkmenian Central Executive Committee of Soviets.

#### *Article 5*

Entering the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the bases laid down in the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic, in accordance with the will of the working people expressed in the Declaration on the Formation of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic at its First Congress, recognises the matters indicated in Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as coming within the jurisdiction of the bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

#### *Article 8*

With the aim of the full defence of the gains of the Great Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic sets up Turkmenian national units which, while being separate military formations, are units of the single, centralised Union Workers' and Peasants' Red Army linked together by single command and administration. The honorary right to serve in the Turkmenian national units is granted to working people only.

#### *Article 9*

The Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic grants all the rights established by the Constitution and legislation of the Republic for citizens of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic to all citizens of other Union Soviet Republics residing on the territory of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic.

Proceeding from the solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic grants all political rights to foreigners who are residing on the territory of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic for the purpose of working and belong to the working class or to the peasantry that does not make use of hired labour, on

the basis of the resolutions of the supreme bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Approved on 30 March 1927

*Obrazovaniye i razvitiye Soyuz Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik (v dokumentakh)* (The Formation and Development of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [Documents], Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1973

## FUNDAMENTAL LAW (CONSTITUTION) OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

### *Article 1*

The present Constitution proceeds from the basic principles of the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People, approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Manifesto of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Government of Byelorussia of 1 January 1919 and the basic principles of the Constitution of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic, adopted by the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, and the Declaration on the Proclamation of the Independence of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia of 1 August 1920, its main task being to guarantee the dictatorship of the proletariat for the purpose of the crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of communism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

### *Article 2*

The Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic is a socialist state of the dictatorship of the proletariat which carries out its tasks on the basis of the alliance of the workers and peasants.

All power within the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic belongs to the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies.

### *Article 3*

The holder of supreme power in the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic is the All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, and in the interval

between Congresses, the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic.

#### *Article 4*

In accordance with the will of the working people who, at the Fourth All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, passed a resolution on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic as a Union Republic transfers to the Union the powers defined in Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In accordance with Article 4 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic retains the right freely to secede from the Union.

#### *Article 5*

Within the limits laid down in the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and in relation to matters within the jurisdiction of the Union, the resolutions of supreme bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are binding on the territory of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic. With this exception no bodies apart from the All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets, the Central Executive Committee of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic, its Presidium and Council of People's Commissars have the right to issue legislation of national significance on the territory of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic.

#### *Article 6*

All land, forests, mineral wealth and waters, and also factories and works, rail, water and air transport and communications are the property of the socialist state, and their use is determined by special laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic within the limits of their jurisdiction established by the constitutions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic.

Approved on 11 April 1927

*Obrazovaniye i razvitiye Soyuz. . .*  
Moscow, 1973

**CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UKRAINIAN SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

Proceeding from the rights of the working and exploited people and the basic propositions of the Declaration of Rights of Peoples proclaimed by the October Revolution, and also the main principles of the dictatorship of the proletariat set out in the Constitution of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic of 10 March 1919, the present Constitution establishes the main tasks and forms of organisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which has set itself the aim of finally overcoming the bourgeoisie, abolishing the exploitation of man by man and establishing communism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

*Article 1*

The Ukrainian Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants. All power within the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic belongs to the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies.

*Article 2*

The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic declares its complete solidarity with all Soviet Republics and, on the basis of the resolutions of the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies and the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, forms with them, on a voluntary and equal basis, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*Article 3*

The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic enters the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a sovereign treaty state and retains the right of free secession from the Union.

The sovereignty of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic is restricted only within the limits indicated in the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and only within the limits pertaining to the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; outside these limits the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic exercises its state power independently.

#### Article 4

All land, mineral wealth, forests and waters, and also factories, works, banks, rail, water and air transport and communications are the socialist state property on the basis established by the legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic. Foreign trade is recognised as a state monopoly.

#### Article 5

The Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic guarantees political rights for the working masses without distinction of sex, religion, race and nationality and deprives the exploiting classes of these rights completely.

#### Article 6

Citizens of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic are *ipso facto* citizens of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

On the territory of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic citizens of other Socialist Soviet Republics enjoy all the rights and perform all the duties laid down for citizens of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic.

#### Article 7

Proceeding from the solidarity of the working people of all nations, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic grants all political rights to foreigners who are residing on the territory of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic for the purpose of working and belong to the working class, and also to the peasantry that does not make use of hired labour, on the basis of the resolutions of the supreme bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Approved on 15 May 1929

*Obrazovaniye i razvitiye Soyuzov...*,  
Moscow, 1973

### FUNDAMENTAL LAW (CONSTITUTION) OF THE UZBEK SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

(*Excerpt*)

1. The present Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic proceeds from the basic provisions of the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People adopted

by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the Declaration on the Formation of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic passed at the First All-Uzbek Congress of Soviets, and the resolution of the Third Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the admission of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic as a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and has as its aim to guarantee the dictatorship of the proletariat for the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the establishment of communism, under which there will be neither division into classes nor state power.

2. The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants. All power within the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic, centrally and locally, belongs to the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies.

3. The supreme body of power of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic is the Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Red Army Deputies of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic, and in the interval between congresses of Soviets, the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic.

4. In accordance with the will of the working people of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic expressed in the Declaration on the Formation of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic passed by the First All-Uzbek Congress of Soviets, and in keeping with the resolution of the Third Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on its entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic, in joining the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, transfers to the Union the powers placed by the agreement of the Union Republics within the jurisdiction of bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and listed in Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Approved on 28 February 1931

Soviet Narodnykh Komissarov Publishers,  
Tashkent, 1932

## Chapter VII

### **FORMATION OF THE UZBEK SSR, THE TURKMEN SSR AND THE TAJIK SSR AND THEIR ENTRY INTO THE USSR**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FIFTH ALL-BUKHARA KURULTAI OF SOVIETS**

##### **ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BUKHARA PEOPLE'S SOVIET REPUBLIC INTO THE BUKHARA SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

Four years ago the working people of Bukhara took up arms and overthrew the despotic power of the Emir and his officials, the enslavers of the working people and plunderers of state property. At the will of the people, on 20 September 1920 Bukhara was declared the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic, on the territory of which the Soviet system was established so that the working people might build a new life in fraternal cooperation, without oppressors and exploiters.

The implacable enemies of the working people who wish to restore the old system of oppression and coercion attacked the Republic of Soviets, sowing discord among the population, inciting and bribing people from other states to oppose free Bukhara. As a result the people were torn away from peaceful labour and drawn into a cruel struggle against their enemies in the defence of revolutionary freedom, their native land, and Soviet power.

Thanks to the iron determination of the people, the enemies were crushed and the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic was cleansed of all internal open enemies. The working people calmly and confidently took up peaceful economic work.

The Bukhara Soviet state is growing in strength, and its red banner is attracting the attention of the working people of other countries as a guiding light in the liberation struggle of the peoples of the whole enslaved East.

Between the peoples living within the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic—Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmen, Kirghizes and others—there is complete equality. It is this that has created the basis of the fraternal alliance and joint struggle of the working people of all the nationalities of Bukhara against the common enemy. The right to self-determination is fully implemented only by Soviet power. The bourgeois states

know and pursue only national enmity, oppression, and the domination of small by large nations.

The growth of Bukhara over the four-year period has found expression in the broad participation of the working people in state affairs, the economic activity of the population, the development of state capital, the establishment of fair taxes, the improving and development of public education and the people's Red Army, and the expansion of workers' unions. All this is strengthening the power of the working people as the revolutionary dictatorship more deeply and firmly.

The national economy is being built along socialist lines and the working people is embarking on socialist construction. Proceeding from the above-mentioned, in accordance with the will and desire of the working masses of Bukhara, the Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai of Soviets *resolves:*

The Bukhara People's Soviet Republic is declared the Bukhara Soviet Socialist Republic. A socialist republic is the organisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat—of the working and exploited masses of workers and the poorest peasantry—against the oppressors and exploiters. The aim of this dictatorship is to effect the transition to socialism by means of bringing about socialist transformations and crushing all counter-revolutionary attacks on the proletariat and the dictatorship. Advancing resolutely towards the set aim, the Bukhara Soviet Socialist Republic declares its fraternal unity with the Socialist Union of Soviet Republics as a whole. Only indissolubly with the latter does it advance for the joint struggle for the triumph of the world communist revolution.

19 September 1924

*Istoriya Sovetskoy Konstitutsii (v dokumentakh) 1917-1956* (A History of the Soviet Constitution. Documents. 1917-1956), 1957, pp. 484-85

#### RESOLUTION OF THE FIFTH ALL-BUKHARA KURULTAI OF SOVIETS

#### ON NATIONAL REPUBLICS AND NATIONAL DEMARCATION

*(Excerpt)*

Together with the expulsion of the tsars, emirs and khans and the abolition of their shameful policy the October Revolution provided the opportunity for each nationality to build its own life in accordance with its own needs. We see that the slogans proclaimed seven years ago by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Communist Party are being put into effect.

In view of these political and economic reasons, which are the result of the nationalities policy of the Union of Soviets and the Communist Party, and with reference to the report on the demarcation of Central Asia in accordance with the national principle the Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai resolves:

I. The tsarist government, which sought to conquer the whole East, destroying the national, cultural and economic organisation of the population of Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorezm, and by its policy inciting it to mutual enmity and conflicting economic interests, for which it set up artificial borders, sought thereby to divorce these peoples from one another.

The Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai, with the aim of totally destroying the noose round the neck of the Central Asian peoples and eliminating the resultant situation, a situation with catastrophic consequences, deems it necessary:

(a) To place the life and destiny of all nationalities in their own hands, for which purpose an Uzbek Republic should be set up.

(b) To introduce the population of Central Asia to socialist life at the earliest opportunity.

(c) To ensure that their express wishes are met in the economic field.

(d) For the purpose of reviving the formerly great Uzbek culture to form a Great Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic from the Uzbek population of Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorezm, and to form an Autonomous Tajik Region from the Tajiks inhabiting this region.

II. For the full implementation of this wish to summon representatives from Bukhara, Turkestan and Khorezm to an All-Bukhara Kurultai.

III. In the interests of the cause and of planning the work to regard the town of Samarkand as the centre of the newly organised Uzbek Republic.

IV. The equality of the Kazakhs and Kirghizes inhabiting the Central Asian regions is recognised.

In the interests of the Turkmen people the Kurultai deems it expedient to form a Turkmen Republic.

V. For the purpose of drawing closer to socialist life and the Soviet system and in the interests of the economy. . . , and also with the aim of the successful completion of the present struggle against capital to consider it essential for the Uzbek and Turkmen Republics to enter the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

RESOLUTION OF THE FIFTH ALL-KHOREZM KURULTAI  
OF SOVIETS

ON NATIONAL-STATE DEMARCATION

The October Revolution of workers and peasants in the former Russian empire liberated all the working people from the exploitation of capital, freed the numerous nationalities of the former tsarist Russia from oppression and created a free Union of Socialist Soviet Republics on the basis of the full equality of all nationalities.

The October Revolution in Russia created the prerequisites for the February coup of 1920 in Khorezm which overthrew the despotism of khan rule and led to the creation of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic. The creation of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic was merely a prerequisite for the correct outlining and solution of the national question, which took place thanks to the raising of the self-consciousness of the working masses of the Khorezm Republic. The raising of the self-consciousness of the working masses manifested itself at the Fourth Kurultai of Soviets (October 1923), which renamed the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic into the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic and put the national question on the agenda, but did not solve it.

The first attempt at a correct solution of the national question was the formation in April of the Khorezm Central Executive Committee of the Turkmen and Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak autonomous regions on the territory of the Khorezm SSR. However, the formation of the autonomous Turkmen, Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak regions did not settle the confused national question, but merely outlined the way to its correct settlement, which was possible only with the formation of homogeneous national republics, on the path to the creation of which the peoples of Turkestan and Bukhara had embarked.

Proceeding from the principles governing the national relations and the national construction of Soviet power, the Khorezm SSR and its vanguard, the Khorezm Communist Party, and in response to the universal will of the worker and dehkans masses of the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic, the Fifth All-Khorezm Kurultai of Soviets of Workers' and Dehkans' Deputies, expressing the supreme will of the working masses of the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic, resolves:

1. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkans masses of the Uzbek people to grant to the Uzbek people the right to withdraw from the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic and to enter the newly formed Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic.

2. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and

dehkan masses of the Turkmen people to grant to the Turkmen people the right to withdraw from the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic and to enter the newly formed Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic.

3. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak people to grant to the Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak people the right to withdraw from the Khorezm Socialist Soviet Republic and to enter the Kirghiz Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic.

4. To consider the entry of the newly formed Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic and Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic into the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics as an essential condition.

5. To consider the Soviet Socialist Khorezm Republic henceforth abolished.

6. The elected provisional Government is charged with the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution.

30 September 1924

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7,  
1965, pp. 35-36

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE ALL-RUSSIA CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
(ELEVENTH CONVOCATION)**

**ON THE REORGANISATION  
OF THE AUTONOMOUS TURKESTAN SOCIALIST  
SOVIET REPUBLIC INTO SEPARATE AUTONOMOUS UNITS**

The All-Russia Central Executive Committee resolves:

To approve the following resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the Autonomous Turkestan SSR.

“The October Revolution of workers and peasants liberated all those oppressed and enslaved by the feudal lords, nobility, landowners and capitalists. The heavy chains of the working people’s many centuries of slavery fell away. The oppressed peoples of the former tsarist empire obtained full freedom and acquired in the revolution the right to national self-determination up to and including secession.

“The seven years of the gigantic revolutionary struggle and the construction of a new society of the working people have yielded great gains. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has today become a most powerful community for the co-habitation of the equal peoples of all the Soviet Republics. Today the Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics is the only part of the world in which all vestiges of national inequality and slavery have been totally eliminated.

"The peoples of Turkestan, who formerly, under tsarism, were in the position of colonial slaves without any rights, are now free and equal and are building their own states by the efforts of the working people. Having achieved national liberation and firmly strengthened the foundation of worker and dehkan power, unswervingly developing and expanding cultural and economic construction, the peoples of Turkestan have attained conditions which make it fully possible for them to build the Autonomous Turkestan Socialist Soviet Republic into homogeneous national states.

"Proceeding from the principles governing the development of national relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and in response to the universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Autonomous Turkestan Socialist Soviet Republic, the Central Executive Committee of the Autonomous Turkestan SSR resolves:

"1. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Uzbek people to grant to the Uzbek people the right to withdraw from the Autonomous Turkestan SSR and to form a Union Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic.

"2. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Turkmen people to grant to the Turkmen people the right to withdraw from the Autonomous Turkestan SSR and to form a Union Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic.

"3. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Kirghiz people to grant to the Kirghiz people the right to withdraw from the Autonomous Turkestan SSR with the purpose of uniting the Kirghiz regions of the Autonomous Turkestan SSR with the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic.

"4. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Kara-Kirghiz people to grant to the Kara-Kirghiz people the right to withdraw from the Autonomous Turkestan SSR and to form the Kara-Kirghiz Autonomous Region within the RSFSR.

"5. In fulfilment of the express universal will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Tajik people to grant to the Tajik people the right to withdraw from the Autonomous Turkestan SSR and to form an Autonomous Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic within the Union Uzbek Republic."

14 October 1924

*Sobraniye uzakoneniya RSFSR*, 1924,  
No. 87, Item 874

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST  
REPUBLICS (SECOND CONVOCATION)

**ON THE DEMARCATION  
OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS IN CENTRAL ASIA  
AND ON THE ENTRY INTO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST  
REPUBLICS OF THE UZBEK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
AND THE TURKMEN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

Having heard the reports: (1) on the resolution of the Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai and the Central Executive Committee of the People's Khorezm Republic, which expressed the will of the population of Bukhara and Khorezm on their unification with their fellow-countrymen inhabiting the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and on the entry of the newly formed states on a treaty basis as Union Republics into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and (2) on the resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on the division of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in accordance with the principle of self-determination of nationalities into the following republics: the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic with the Autonomous Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic and the Kara-Kirghiz Autonomous Region forming part of the RSFSR, and on the joining of the Kirghiz part of Turkestan to the Kirghiz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic forming part of the RSFSR, the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics confirms that the freely expressed will of the working people is the supreme law, and calls upon the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to legalise the newly formed Republics in Central Asia in accordance with the decision of the Congresses of Soviets of these Republics.

27 October 1924

*Sobraniye zakonov SSSR* (Collected  
Laws of the USSR), 1924, No. 19, Item  
187

DECLARATION OF THE FIRST ALL-UZBEK CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE UZBEK UNION SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October of 1917 is the first stage in the socialist transformation of the world, the beginning of a new era, the era of proletarian

revolutions throughout the world. Only the October of 1917, having liberated the working people from the class oppression by the capitalists and landowners, brought liberation to the oppressed peoples in the former tsarist empire, giving them the right to self-determination up to and including state secession. Only in the camp of the Soviets, only under the dictatorship of the proletariat which rallied round it the majority of the population, was it proved possible to eliminate national oppression entirely, to create conditions for mutual trust and lay the foundation for the fraternal cooperation of the peoples. . . .

The peoples of Central Asia, who for centuries suffered from the unrestrained oppression by tsarism, the power of the khan and the emir, and lay in total economic and spiritual bondage to the rich landowners, mullahs and officials, were deprived of the most elementary human rights.

In the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia of 2 November 1917, the Great October Revolution from its very first days triumphantly proclaimed the equality and sovereignty of all the peoples inhabiting the former empire.

For the purpose of bringing about national self-determination at the outpost of Soviet power in the East—Central Asia—after the elimination of all obstacles to full realisation of the basic ideas of national self-determination, the working masses of the kishlaks and auls of the Uzbek lands, in the person of the First Congress of Soviets from the territory of the former Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorezm Republics, solemnly and publicly announce that henceforth on the territory of the Uzbek people, consisting of the Tashkent, Samarkand, Ferghana, Kashka-Darya, Zaravshan, Surkhan-Darya and Khorezm regions, for the first time in the history of this people the Uzbek Union Soviet Socialist Republic of workers and peasants is established, with the Tajik Autonomous SSR being part of it.

Basing itself on the will of the working masses of the former Turkestan SSR, Bukhara SSR and Khorezm SSR, in accordance with the resolutions of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Turkestan Central Executive Committee of 16 September 1924, the All-Bukhara Kurultai and the Khorezm Kurultai of September and October 1924 on the demarcation, according to the national principle, of the Soviet Republics of Central Asia and on the entry of the Uzbek SSR into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the First All-Uzbek Congress of Soviets of Workers', Dehkans' and Red Army Deputies establishes that:

All power within the Union Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, both centrally and locally, belongs to the whole worker and dehqan population of the country, united in the urban and kishlak Soviets.

In the name of the world solidarity of workers and peasants, aimed at protecting their socialist homeland against external and internal dangers, for the purpose of uniting the efforts of the peoples inhabiting the USSR for the rapid revival and total recovery of the economy, and for the purpose of increasing the country's productive forces on the basis of the fraternal cooperation of the peoples, the working masses of the Uzbek people declare before the whole world their inviolable decision on voluntary entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a full member and on the basis of the declaration of the First Congress of the USSR, which ensures both the security of the Union Republics and full internal economic growth and freedom of national development for the peoples.

17 February 1925

*Sobraniye zakoneny UzSSR*, 1925,  
No. 9, Item 100

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-TURKMEN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

**ON THE ADOPTION OF THE DECLARATION,  
DRAFTING OF THE CONSTITUTION  
AND FORMATION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
AND THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS  
OF THE TURKMEN SSR**

1. To approve and publish the Declaration on the Formation of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic.

2. To instruct the Central Executive Committee of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic on the basis of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the approved Declaration, taking account of local everyday conditions and the legislative experience of other republics in this respect, to draft a Constitution of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic and present it for approval to the Second Congress of Soviets of the Turkmen SSR.

3. Until the drafting of the Constitution of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic, to form, in keeping with Article 64 of the Constitution of the USSR, a Central Executive Committee of the Turkmen SSR.

4. To instruct the Central Executive Committee of the Turkmen SSR to form, in keeping with Article 67 of the Constitution of the USSR, an executive body, a Council of People's Commissars, composed as indicated in the said Article 67 of the Constitution of the USSR.

20 February 1925

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7,  
1965, p. 505

DECLARATION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-TURKMEN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE TURKMEN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

The peoples of Central Asia, for centuries under the oppression of khan and emir power and tsarism, were politically and economically enslaved and nationally divided.

The Great October Revolution, which destroyed the power of capital and the exploiters and rent the chains of political and economic slavery, in the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia of 2 November 1917 proclaimed the principles of equality and sovereignty for the peoples of Russia and their right to self-determination, thereby giving the peoples of the former tsarist colonies the possibility of starting a new life.

The objective conditions of the Civil War have not made it possible until the present time to put these principles into effect.

The formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, being a new resolute step along the path of uniting the working people of all countries into a world Soviet Socialist Republic, united the USSR into a single state capable of ensuring both the external security and internal economic prosperity and freedom of national development of peoples on the basis of their voluntary, equal, and peaceful living together and fraternal cooperation in the creation of a united, reliable bulwark against world capitalism.

Today, having eliminated the conditions preventing the implementation of the great principles of state life on which the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples is based, the Turkmen working people in the person of its First Congress of Soviets solemnly proclaim the formation of an independent Soviet Socialist Republic on the territory long occupied by the Turkmen people, to consist of the following areas: Poltorak Mervi, Kerk, Leninsky and Tashauz.

True to the strivings of the workers and dehqan masses for solidarity and fraternal unity, the Turkmen working people solemnly declare before the whole of working mankind their desire to enter the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a full member for the purpose of creating a united front for the common struggle against world capital.

Unswervingly striving for the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, the total elimination of the division of society into classes, the establishment of the socialist organisation of society, the First Congress of Soviets of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic subscribes

to the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People passed by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets and invites the Government of the Turkmen Republic in full accordance with the legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics resolutely to implement and put into effect the principles of this Declaration.

The Turkmen working people declare the following to be the basic principles for the work of all bodies of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic:

1. For the purpose of the complete crushing of the bourgeoisie, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the achievement of socialism the main task of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is the establishment of the dictatorship of the town and aul proletariat and the poorest dehkans in the form of strong Soviet power.

2. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is a free socialist state of all the working people of Turkmenistan.

3. All power within the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic belongs to the whole working population of the country united in the town, aul, village and kishlak Soviets.

4. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic recognises work as the duty of all citizens of the Republic.

5. With the aim of ensuring working people true freedom of conscience the church is separated from the state and the school from the church, and the freedom of religious and anti-religious propaganda is granted to all citizens.

6. With the aim of ensuring working people true freedom of expression of their opinions the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic abolishes the dependence of the press on capital and places at the disposal of the working class and poor dehkans all the technical and material means of publishing newspapers, brochures, books and all other printed matter and guarantees their free dissemination throughout the country.

7. With the aim of ensuring working people true freedom of assembly the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic renders the workers and poorest dehkans all material and other assistance for their association and organisation.

8. With the aim of ensuring working people true freedom of unions, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic places at the disposal of the working class and poor dehkans all premises suitable for the holding of public meetings.

9. With the aim of ensuring working people true access to knowledge the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic undertakes to provide workers and poor dehkans with full, all-sided and free education.

10. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic grants the right of

asylum to all foreigners persecuted for political and religious offences.

11. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, recognising the equal rights of citizens without distinction of race or nationality, declares that permitting any privileges or advantages on this basis, and also any oppression of national minorities or curtailment of their equal rights or their inalienable right to use their native tongue are contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic.

12. The official languages of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic are Turkmenian and Russian.

13. Guided by the interests of the working population as a whole, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic deprives individual persons and individual groups of persons of rights which they exercise to the detriment of the interests of the socialist revolution.

14. The supreme body of power of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is the Congress of Soviets of Dehkans', Workers' and Red Army Deputies of Turkmenia, and in the interval between congresses the Turkmen Central Executive Committee.

15. Recognising that women have full and equal rights, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic takes all measures to abolish any and all everyday conditions that tend to restrict women's rights.

16. In entering the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a full member, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic exercises its own state power independently, and its sovereignty is restricted only within the limits indicated by the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in respect of subjects which it places within the jurisdiction of the Union.

17. The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic has the right of free secession from the Union.

18. The territory of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic cannot be changed without its consent.

20 February 1925

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7,  
1965, p. 506

RESOLUTION  
OF THE FIRST ALL-TURKMEN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

ON THE ENTRY INTO  
THE UNION OF SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Great Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, which destroyed the power of capital, exploitation and coercion and rent asunder the chains of age-old slavery, in its great act of 2(15) November 1917—

the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia—proclaimed the basic principles of equality and sovereignty and their right to self-determination.

The period of the Civil War did not make it possible until recent times to put the principles proclaimed into effect.

With the general pacification of the country, the peoples of Central Asia expressed their will at numerous meetings, congresses and conferences—to create independent national republics in Central Asia.

Today, the First Congress of Soviets of Workers', Dehkans' and Red Army Deputies of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic, proceeding from the general aspirations of the workers' and dehkans' masses for solidarity and fraternal union, with the aim of creating a united front for the common struggle against world capital, and also bearing in mind that only the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics can ensure external security and freedom of economic growth and national development, resolves:

To enter the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the principles outlined in the Constitution of the USSR, having entrusted the authorised delegation of the Turkmen SSR to submit the present resolution to the next regular All-Union Congress of Soviets.

20 February 1925

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7,  
1965, p. 509

RESOLUTION  
OF THE NINTH ALL-UKRAINE CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

ON THE ENTRY OF THE UZBEKISTAN  
AND TURKMENISTAN SSR  
INTO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Taking into account the desire expressed by the working masses of the newly formed Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan Socialist Soviet Republics to join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and in a joint Union to work for the cause of the defence of the power of the working people against world capital, the Ninth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets has resolved:

1. To welcome the joining of the Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan Soviet Republics to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. To express the fraternal agreement of the working masses of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic to the admission of the two new Soviet Republics to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

3. To instruct the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR at the Third All-Union Congress of Soviets of the USSR to vote in favour of the inclusion of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

10 May 1925

*Sobraniye zakonenyi UkSSR*, 1925,  
Nos. 49-50, Item 310

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE TWELFTH ALL-RUSSIA CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS**

**ON APPROVAL OF THE DIVISION  
OF THE TURKESTAN AUTONOMOUS SOCIALIST SOVIET  
REPUBLIC**

Proceeding from the principle of self-determination of peoples and in response to the express wish of the workers' and dehkans' masses of the Turkestan Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic to build their own Soviet socialist republics and regions within national frontiers, the Twelfth All-Russia Congress of Soviets r e s o l v e s:

**I**

1. To approve the resolution of the Second Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Eleventh Convocation) on granting the Uzbek, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Kara-Kirghiz and Tajik peoples inhabiting Turkestan the right to withdraw from the Turkestan Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic and to form new Soviet socialist republics and regions on a national basis.

2. To confirm, in accordance with the universal will of the workers' and dehkans' masses of the Kirghiz, Kara-Kirghiz and Kara-Kalpak peoples expressed at Congresses of Soviets, the unification of those parts of the territory of Turkestan inhabited by Kirghizes with the Kirghiz Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic and the formation of the Kara-Kirghiz Autonomous Region within the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Region within the Kirghiz Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic.

**II**

To approve the division of the Turkestan Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic on the principle of national self-determination effected

on the basis of the above-mentioned resolution of the Second Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Eleventh Convocation).

11 May 1925

*Sobraniye zakonenyi RSFSR*, 1925,  
No. 31, Item 222

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
ON THE ENTRY INTO THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS OF THE TURKMEN  
AND UZBEK SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS**

The Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR welcomes the free expression of will of the peoples of the Turkmen and Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republics on the entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the Turkmen and Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republics.

The Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR recalls that, in accordance with the Declaration on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, access to the Union is open to all socialist Soviet republics, both those already in existence and those that may arise in the future.

The entry of the Republics in question into the USSR is fresh proof that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is indeed a voluntary association of equal peoples and a reliable bulwark of the formerly oppressed peoples.

The Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR resolves:

1. To extend in accordance with Article 1 (c) of the Constitution of the USSR the validity of the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Turkmen and Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republics; and

2. To instruct the Presidium of the Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR to draft amendments to the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics proceeding from the fact of the entry of the two new Union Republics into the USSR, and to submit these for the approval of the present Congress of Soviets.

13 May 1925

*Sobraniye zakonov SSSR*, 1925, No. 35,  
Item 244

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE THIRD CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
ON AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE USSR IN CONNECTION WITH  
THE ENTRY INTO THE USSR  
OF THE TURKMEN AND UZBEK UNION SOCIALIST  
SOVIET REPUBLICS**

*(Excerpt)*

In connection with the entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the Turkmen and Uzbek Union Socialist Soviet Republics the Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR resolves that the Constitution of the USSR be amended as follows:

1. To indicate in the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the inclusion of the Turkmen and Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republics in the USSR, for which purpose the words "the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic and the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic" should be added after the words "and the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia" in the text of the introductory part of the treaty (Section Two of the Constitution of the USSR), which should read as follows:

"The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkSSR), the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic (BSSR), the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR: the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia and the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia), the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic (TurkSSR) and the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic (UzSSR) are united in a single federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

20 May 1925

*Sobraniye zakonov SSSR*, 1925, No. 35,  
Item 245

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDIUUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE USSR  
COMMUNIQUE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TAJIK ASSR**

*(Excerpt)*

2. Taking into account that the Tajik Autonomous Republic is economically, nationally and geographically entirely isolated from the UzSSR, to consider it timely with the aim of the more successful economic and cultural development of Tajikistan to raise the question of

the withdrawal of the Tajik Republic from the UzSSR and its entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an independent Union Republic.

3. To consider it necessary to discuss and submit the question of the transformation of Tajikistan into a Union Republic both at the Congress of Soviets of Tajikistan and at the Congress of Soviets or a session of the Central Executive Committee of the UzSSR.

To request the Presidiums of the Central Executive Committees of the UzSSR and the Tajik ASSR to inform the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR within two months of their decisions concerning the withdrawal of Tajikistan from the UzSSR.

12 June 1929

Minutes of the Sitting of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, 1929, No. 2, Item 8 (in Russian)

RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF SOVIETS OF THE UZBEK SSR

**RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE USSR ON THE TRANSFORMATION  
OF THE TAJIK ASSR INTO A UNION REPUBLIC  
FORMING PART OF THE USSR**

*(Excerpt)*

In five years the working people of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic under the guidance of the fraternal UzSSR and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have attained unprecedented economic and cultural growth. Tajikistan has acquired a network of schools, hospitals, agricultural centres and various cultural institutions, factories and electric power stations are being built, a railway is under construction, cultural personnel is being trained and the economy of the kishlak is being reorganised.

In these five years in the Tajik ASSR, thanks to the correctly pursued national policy of the Communist Party and Soviet power, there has been a strengthening of the mutual trust and cooperation of the peoples inhabiting the TASSR, thanks to which the conditions for the further cultural and economic growth of the working masses of Tajikistan have been ensured.

Bearing in mind the great achievements in the economic and cultural construction of the Tajik ASSR, the existence of vast prospects for further development, and the geographical, political and economic

position of the TASSR, and with the aim of ensuring the further growth of its political and economic might and the full national free development of the peoples of Tajikistan, the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the UzSSR considers it opportune to raise the question of the separation of Tajikistan from the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic into a Union Republic forming an integral part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR of 12 June 1929.

13 July 1929

Minutes of the Sitzings of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Uzbek SSR, 1929, No. 20/9, Item 1 and No. 22/11, Item 12 (in Russian)

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SOVIETS  
(SECOND CONVOCATION) OF THE TAJIK AUTONOMOUS  
SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

**ON THE SEPARATION OF THE TAJIK ASSR FROM  
THE UZBEK SSR AND ITS ENTRY INTO THE USSR**

*(Excerpt)*

1. Having heard the report of the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Tajik ASSR on the economic and cultural progress of Tajikistan and on the prospects of its future development, the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Tajik ASSR fully approves the policy and all measures connected with the separation of Tajikistan into a Union Republic.

2. The Second Session notes that thanks to the all-round help, assistance and guidance of the Union Government, the Central Asian bodies and the Government of the UzSSR, on the one hand, and the correctly pursued policy of the Government of the Tajik ASSR, on the other, the Tajik ASSR has grown and strengthened considerably in the cultural, economic and political respects.

The period of peaceful construction, particularly the last year, has witnessed a considerable increase in the total area under crops, in particular that under cotton, a rise in industrial output, continued improvement of roads, the construction of a railway, the strengthening of the Soviet and economic apparatus, increased cooperation, a significant rise in the number of schools, considerable increases in the

allocations for education and medical care and a significant strengthening of the political activity and organisation of the broad mass of working people.

3. The Session notes in particular that all the above-mentioned achievements are primarily the result of the correct pursuance of the national policy of the revolutionary proletariat aimed at the elimination of cultural and economic inequality between the different nationalities.

Proceeding from the foregoing and bearing in mind the demands and will of the broad working masses of Tajikistan expressed at numerous meetings and plenums, the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Tajik ASSR *resolves*:

1. To consider essential the separation of Tajikistan from the Uzbek SSR and its entry as a Union Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. For the implementation of the resolution in question to call an Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Tajik ASSR on 5 October of this year.

3. The Session considers that the main tasks of the Government and local Soviet bodies in the future should be:

(a) transformation of the economy of Tajikistan into an important base for the development of cotton growing, which will ensure the rapid rate of industrialisation of Tajikistan, placing of agriculture on a higher technical basis and its collectivisation, liberation of the broad mass of the working people from the exploitation of the bais and ensuring of the rapid rise of their material and cultural level;

(b) further Sovietisation of Tajikistan by means of strengthening the Soviet machinery, the large-scale drawing of day labourers, the poor and middle peasants into the work of the Soviet machinery, and the strengthening and reinforcement of the organisation and positions of the poor and the day labourers;

(c) full ensuring of the rights of national minorities by means of the development of schools in their native language, their economic provision, and also the setting up of national and autonomous districts (Uzbek, Turkmen, etc.);

(d) further social and cultural development of Tajikistan, particularly as regards the abolition of illiteracy among the working masses, and the all-round promotion of a culture that is national in form and socialist in content.

4. The Session instructs all Soviet bodies and public organisations to give the campaign for the convocation of an Extraordinary Congress a broad political nature, ensuring the active participation of the working people of Tajikistan in the elections to the Extraordinary Congress

and the broad representation of the day labourers, the poor and middle peasants at the Congress.

5. As regards the reorganisation of the state machinery it is necessary to maintain it as economically as possible and to improve it.

When reorganising the state machinery, a concrete programme must be drawn up for its nationalisation (the running of parallel day-to-day administration, the large-scale drawing of personnel from the indigenous population, the training of personnel from the main local nationality, etc.).

Special attention should be paid to strengthening the districts, particularly the cotton-growing and border areas, with qualified personnel, to reviving the activity of the Soviets, to creating and strengthening local budgets and their correct and rational use.

6. The Session instructs the government to accelerate the demarcation of the territorial frontiers of the Tajik Republic and to draw up a new system of administrative and economic division for Tajikistan, ensuring the broad participation of the working masses of Tajikistan in the drafting of the new administrative division.

7. The Session notes with satisfaction that the Khojent Region has actually joined Tajikistan and invites the government to take measures to establish a proper leadership and the closest cooperation with it with the aim of strengthening its economic and cultural development.

11 September 1929

*Sobraniye zakoneny Tajikskoy ASSR,*  
1929, No. 17, Item 57

DECLARATION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY THIRD ALL-TAJIK  
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

ON THE TRANSFORMATION  
OF THE TAJIK ASSR INTO  
THE TAJIK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
AND ITS INCLUSION IN THE USSR

*(Excerpt)*

1. Twelve years ago the October uprising of the proletariat destroyed the rule of capital in Russia and Turkestan. The first workers' state appeared in the world of mankind fighting for communism.

With the help of the victorious proletariat nine years ago the September Revolution shattered the power of the khan in Bukhara. For the first time in a country of the oppressed East a Soviet Republic was set up which liberated the population from colonial slavery.

Five years ago the national division of the Central Asian Soviet Republics—Bukhara, Turkestan and Khorezm—took place. Two new state entities based on socialist principles joined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic and the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. The workers and peasants of the Tajik people united to form the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as part of fraternal Soviet Uzbekistan.

The emancipation of labour and the struggle for the socialist system is leading inevitably to the cessation of national oppression. Soviet power is opening up the way for all nationalities to complete self-determination: an alliance of working people on their native land and their fraternal cooperation with other nations. This is why all the working people who are building the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic today were and are fighters for the Soviet worker and peasant order, exponents of the proletarian revolution which is being brought about by the alliance of workers and dehkans.

3. By repulsing the enemies, restoring the economy, reorganising it on socialist principles, and strengthening the Soviet state, the working people of Tajikistan have succeeded, hand in hand with the working people of Uzbekistan over these years, not only in emerging victorious from the bitter struggle with the *basmachi*, but also in achieving great successes in their own economic, political and cultural development.

Today, on the threshold of vast prospects for the future development of the Tajik Republic, with socialist construction being substantially expanded, the working people of Tajikistan have declared their desire to withdraw from the Uzbek SSR and join the USSR as a Union Republic.

The movement of working Tajiks has spread to all the regions in which they live, embracing the broadest strata. A single desire is expressed in it: on the basis of full national self-determination to fuse the working population of the Tajik land into the workers' state together with the other members of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, advancing the cause of building a socialist society.

4. The will of the working people is the law of the Soviet state, and by virtue of this we solemnly declare in the name of the workers and peasants of all Tajikistan and autonomous Gorny Badakhshan to all the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that:

1) By the supreme will of the Tajik people and the other nationalities living fraternally with it the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic is transformed into a Union Soviet Socialist Republic consisting of the Autonomous Region of Gorny Badakhshan and the following areas: Khojent, Gissar, Ura-Tyube, Penjikent, Kulyab, Kurgan-Tyube and Garm.

2) The Socialist Republic of Tajikistan is an organisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat against all oppressors and exploiters.

3) The revolutionary aspiration of the working masses of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic is the unswerving desire to join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the basis of a separate treaty with the aim of bringing about socialism, defending it against imperialism and establishing the international fraternity of all the working people.

4) The workers and peasants of socialist Tajikistan see all the greatness and complexity of the tasks confronting the Soviet Union as an alliance of the working people and exploited masses of Europe and Asia and they are aware of all the difficulties on the path to socialism amid brutalised, armed imperialism preparing new wars. But we know full well that the solution of these tasks is in our hands, in the growing strength of the workers and peasants of socialist Tajikistan, as units and detachments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which boldly repulses all the attacks of the capitalist world and is leading all working people to freedom from the rule of imperialism—to socialism.

16 October 1929

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 7,  
1965, p. 658

RESOLUTION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY THIRD ALL-TAJIK  
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

**ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE TAJIK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

1. The Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Tajik ASSR notes that as a result of the all-round help, assistance and guidance of the Union proletariat in the person of the Union government, the Central Asian bodies and the government of Uzbekistan, and also thanks to the correctly pursued policy of the government of the Tajik ASSR Tajikistan has grown and strengthened considerably in the cultural, economic and political respects.

2. The Extraordinary Congress of Soviets stresses in particular that the afore-mentioned achievements and the formation of the Union Tajik Republic are a result of the correct and consistent pursuance by the revolutionary proletariat of a nationality policy aimed at destroying all national oppression and eliminating all economic and cultural inequality between different nationalities and at their national self-determination.

3. The Extraordinary Congress of Soviets empowers the plenipoten-

tiary delegation at the session of the Central Executive Committee of Uzbekistan to propose a resolution on the separation of the Tajik Republic from the UzSSR, and the plenipotentiary delegation at the session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union government to propose the voluntary entry of Tajikistan into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

4. To instruct the Soviet government of Tajikistan to be guided by the following main tasks in its future work: the changing of the economy of Tajikistan into an important base for the growing of cotton, the socialist reorganisation of the economy on a higher technical base, the intensive collectivisation of agriculture, the intensive Sovietisation of Tajikistan by means of strengthening the Soviet machinery from top to bottom and large-scale drawing of the day labourers, the poor and middle peasants into the work of the Soviet machinery, strengthening the organisation of the day labourers and the poor peasants and reinforcing the alliance with the middle peasants, and the further intensive development of the socio-cultural construction in Tajikistan.

5. The Extraordinary Congress of Soviets in particular instructs the Soviet government of Tajikistan to ensure the rights of national minorities in full by means of their all-round economic provision and also by setting up autonomous and administrative-economic national areas, and to present an appropriate draft for consideration by the next session of the Central Executive Committee.

6. To instruct the Soviet government of Tajikistan to draft a Constitution of the Union Tajik Republic and to present the draft for consideration by a session of the Central Executive Committee.

7. To invite the Soviet government of Tajikistan to ensure the proper direction of the Khojent area, and also its economic and cultural development.

8. The Congress invites the government of Tajikistan to expedite consideration of the question of the joining of areas of the Uzbek Republic with a predominantly Tajik population to Tajikistan.

9. The Congress empowers the government to ensure fraternal mutual relations and friendship with the working people of individual countries.

16 October 1929

*Khronologicheskoye sobraniye deistvuyushchego zakonodatelstva Tajikskoy SSR* (Chronological Collection of Valid Legislation of the Tajik SSR), Vol. 1, 1964, p. 7

DECLARATION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY THIRD ALL-TAJIK  
CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

ON THE FORMATION  
OF THE TAJIK SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLIC

(Excerpt)

The October Revolution, by liberating the working people from class oppression by the capitalists and landowners, brought liberation to the oppressed peoples of the former tsarist empire, granting them the right to self-determination up to and including state secession.

Under the guidance and with the help of the Russian proletariat the working people of Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorezm overthrew the power of the emirs, destroyed the rule of capital and established the power of Soviets, which made possible the free self-determination of the Central Asian peoples on the basis of the great principles of the Great October Revolution.

After the national demarcation of the Soviet Central Asian republics in 1924 the working people of Tajikistan formed the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic which joined the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic.

The working people of Tajikistan, by restoring and reorganising the country's economy on socialist principles, and at the same time repulsing the frenzied onslaught of class enemies, the hirelings of imperialism, have gained a decisive victory in eliminating the *basmachi* and tremendous achievements in the political, economic and cultural spheres.

Today, on the threshold of great new tasks of socialist construction and for the completion of national self-determination, the working people of Tajikistan in full agreement with the working people of Uzbekistan have announced their desire to leave the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic and join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a Union Republic.

In the name of the world solidarity of workers and peasants, aimed at the defence of their socialist homeland against external and internal dangers and with the purpose of uniting the efforts of the peoples inhabiting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, for the successful building of socialism on the basis of fraternal cooperation, the Extraordinary Third Congress of the Tajik Republic in the name of the workers and peasants of all Tajikistan and Autonomous Gorny Badakhshan solemnly declares to the people of the world:

1. By the supreme will of the working people Tajikistan is trans-

formed from an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic into a Union Soviet Socialist Republic consisting of the Autonomous Region of Gorny Badakhshan and the following areas: Khojent, Ura-Tyube, Gissar, Garm, Kurgan-Tyube, Kulyab and Penjikent.

2. It voluntarily joins the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a full member and on the basis of the Declaration of the First Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

3. The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic ensures the fraternal living together of the working people of all the nationalities inhabiting it and the political, economic and cultural growth of these nationalities.

Long live the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics!

16 October 1929

*Khronologicheskoye sobraniye... , p. 9*

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY THIRD SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF SOVIETS OF THE UZBEK SSR**

**ON THE SEPARATION  
OF THE TAJIK AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC FROM THE UZBEK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

Proceeding from the principles of national self-determination that govern national relations and in response to the express will of the worker and dehkan masses of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on the voluntary withdrawal from the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic with entry on the same voluntary principle into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Extraordinary Third Session (Third Convocation) of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic *resolves*:

1. To approve the decision of the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Tajik ASSR passed on the basis of the will of the working masses of Tajikistan on withdrawal from the UzSSR and the formation of a Union Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan.

2. To instruct the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee to draft amendments to the Constitution and effective legislation of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in accordance with the separation of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and to submit them for approval by the Fourth Congress of Soviets of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic.

3. To request the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR to include in the agenda of the Second Session of the Cen-

tral Executive Committee of the USSR the question of the approval of the decision of the Extraordinary Third Session (Third Convocation) of the Central Executive Committee of the UzSSR on the formation of the Union Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan.

7 November 1929

*Sobraniye uzakoneny UzSSR, 1929,*  
No. 70, Item 413-a

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE USSR (FIFTH CONVOCATION)**

**ON THE ENTRY OF THE TAJIK UNION REPUBLIC  
INTO THE USSR**

Having heard and discussed the report on the Resolution of the Extraordinary Third Congress of Soviets of Tajikistan and the Resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic on the separation of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic from the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic and its entry into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the Tajik Union Republic, the Central Executive Committee of the USSR is pleased to welcome this decision of the peoples of the Uzbek and Tajik republics.

At a time when in the capitalist camp national enmity and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism continue, here in the USSR, in the socialist camp, there remains as before mutual trust and peace, equality of nationalities, peaceful living together and fraternal cooperation of peoples.

The transformation of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic into a Union Republic and its entry into the family of fraternal Union Republics is new and striking proof of this.

The Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic is entering the USSR at a time of great socialist construction in our country, the successes of which arouse the hatred of our class enemies, a time which requires the utmost uniting of efforts of all the peoples of the USSR both for strengthening the united front of the fraternal Soviet republics in the face of capitalist encirclement and for extensive socialist construction.

The Central Executive Committee of the USSR expresses its full conviction that the voluntary entry of the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will promote the further economic and cultural development of the working masses of Tajikistan on the path of the socialist reorganisation of the new Union Republic.

In accordance with the will expressed by the working people of Tajikistan and on the basis of the Constitution of the USSR the Central Executive Committee of the USSR *resolves*:

1. To extend the operation of the Treaty on the Formation of the USSR to the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic.

2. To make reference in the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the entry of the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic into the USSR, for which purpose in the text of the introductory section of the Treaty (Section Two of the Constitution of the USSR) the words "and the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic (TajSSR)" should be added after the words "the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic (UzSSR)" and the introductory section of the Treaty should read as follows:

"The Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkSSR), the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic (BSSR), the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR: the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia and the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia), the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic (TurkSSR), the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic (UzSSR) and the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic (TajSSR) are united into a single federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

5 December 1929

*Sbornik zakonov SSSR*, 1929, No. 75,  
Item 717

RESOLUTION  
OF THE SIXTH CONGRESS OF SOVIETS  
OF THE USSR

ON THE REPORT ON CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

*(Excerpt)*

Having heard and discussed the Report on Constitutional Matters, the Sixth Congress of Soviets of the USSR notes with satisfaction that:

1. After the national demarcation of the peoples of Central Asia in 1924 their economic and political growth, the stable peace established between them and the fraternal cooperation within the camp of the Soviets under the dictatorship of the proletariat, have made possible the separation of Tajikistan into an independent Union Republic and its entry into the USSR.

8. The Sixth Congress of Soviets of the USSR . . . *resolves*:

To make the following amendments to the Constitution of the USSR:

1) To make reference in the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the uniting in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic, for which purpose in the text of the introductory section of the Treaty (Section Two of the Constitution of the USSR) the words "and the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic (TajSSR)" should be added after the words "the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic (UzSSR)" and the introductory section of the Treaty should read as follows. . . .

17 March 1931

*Sbornik zakonov SSSR*, 1931, No. 17,  
Item 162

**III**  
**THE 1936 CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR.**  
**FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE USSR**  
**AS A FEDERAL STATE**

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Chapter VIII

**ADOPTION OF THE USSR CONSTITUTION OF 1936.**  
**ACCESSION OF THE AZERBAIJAN SSR,**  
**THE GEORGIAN SSR AND OTHER SOVIET REPUBLICS**  
**TO THE USSR**

RESOLUTION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY EIGHTH CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS OF THE USSR

**ON THE APPROVAL OF THE CONSTITUTION**  
**(FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST**  
**REPUBLICS**

The Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics *resolves*:

That the draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics be *endorsed* as submitted by the Congress Drafting Commission.

5 December 1936

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 3,  
1960, p. 227

**CONSTITUTION**  
**(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)**  
**OF THE UNION**  
**OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

**Chapter I**

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

*Article 1*

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2*

The political foundation of the USSR is the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which grew and became strong as a result of the

overthrow of the power of the landowners and capitalists and the attainment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

### *Article 3*

All power in the USSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

### *Article 4*

The economic foundation of the USSR is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the instruments and means of production, firmly established as a result of abolishing the capitalist system of economy, the private ownership of the instruments and means of production, and the exploitation of man by man.

### *Article 5*

Socialist property in the USSR exists either in the form of state property (belonging to the whole people) or in the form of cooperative and collective-farm property (the property of collective farms or cooperative societies).

### *Article 6*

The land, its mineral wealth, waters, forests, the factories and mines, rail, water and air transport facilities, the banks, means of communication, large state-organised agricultural enterprises (state farms, machine and tractor stations, etc.), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of the dwelling-houses in the cities and industrial localities, are state property, that is, belong to the whole people.

### *Article 7*

The enterprises of the collective farms and cooperative organisations, with their livestock, buildings, implements, and output, are the common, socialist property of the collective farms and cooperative organisations.

Every collective-farm household, in addition to its basic income from the collective farm, has for its own use a small plot of land attached to the house and, as its own property, a dwelling-house, livestock, poultry, and minor agricultural implements—in conformity with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

#### *Article 8*

The land occupied by the collective farms is made over to them for their free use for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

#### *Article 9*

In addition to the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the USSR, the law permits the small private undertakings of individual peasants and handicraftsmen based on their own labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

#### *Article 10*

The right of citizens to own, as their personal property, income and savings derived from work, to own a dwelling-house and a supplementary husbandry, articles of household and articles of personal use and convenience, is protected by law, as is also the right of citizens to inherit personal property.

#### *Article 11*

The economic life of the USSR is determined and guided by the state economic plan for the purpose of increasing the wealth of society, steadily raising the material and cultural standards of the working people and strengthening the independence of the USSR and its defence potential.

#### *Article 12*

Work in the USSR is a duty and a matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the USSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

### **Chapter II**

#### **THE STATE STRUCTURE**

#### *Article 13*

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a federal state, formed on the basis of a voluntary union of equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,  
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,  
Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic.

#### *Article 14*

The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, covers:

- a) Representation of the USSR in international relations, conclusion, ratification and denunciation of treaties of the USSR with other states, establishment of general procedure governing the relations of the Union Republics with foreign states;
- b) Questions of war and peace;
- c) Admission of new republics into the USSR;
- d) Control over the observance of the Constitution of the USSR, and ensuring conformity of the Constitutions of the Union Republics with the Constitution of the USSR;
- e) Approval of changes to boundaries between Union Republics;
- f) Approval of the formation of new Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions within Union Republics;
- g) Organisation of the defence of the USSR, direction of all the Armed Forces of the USSR, formulation of principles guiding the organisation of the military formations of the Union Republics;
- h) Foreign trade on the basis of state monopoly;
- i) State security;
- j) Approval of the economic plans of the USSR;
- k) Approval of the consolidated state budget of the USSR and of the report on its implementation; fixing taxes and revenues that go to the Union, Republican and local budgets;
- l) Administration of banks and industrial, agricultural and trading

enterprises and institutions under Union jurisdiction; general direction of industry and building under Union-Republican jurisdiction;

m) Administration of transport and communications of all-Union importance;

n) Direction of the monetary and credit system;

o) Organisation of state insurance;

p) Contracting and granting of loans;

q) Definition of the basic principles of land tenure and of the use of mineral wealth, forests and waters;

r) Definition of the basic principles in the spheres of education and public health;

s) Organisation of a uniform system of economic statistics;

t) Definition of the fundamentals of labour legislation;

u) Definition of the fundamentals of legislation on the judicial system and judicial procedure and the fundamentals of civil, criminal and corrective-labour legislation;

v) Legislation on Union citizenship; legislation on rights of foreigners;

w) Definition of the fundamentals of legislation on marriage and the family;

x) Promulgation of all-Union acts of amnesty.

#### *Article 15*

The sovereignty of the Union Republics is limited only in the spheres defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR. Outside of these spheres each Union Republic exercises state authority independently. The USSR protects the sovereign rights of the Union Republics.

#### *Article 16*

Each Union Republic has its own Constitution, which takes account of the specific features of the Republic and is drawn up in full conformity with the Constitution of the USSR.

#### *Article 17*

The right freely to secede from the USSR is reserved to every Union Republic.

#### *Article 18*

The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent.

*Article 18-a*

Each Union Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

*Article 18-b*

Each Union Republic has its own Republican military formations.

*Article 19*

The laws of the USSR have the same force within the territory of every Union Republic.

*Article 20*

In the event of divergence between a law of a Union Republic and a law of the Union, the Union law shall prevail.

*Article 21*

Uniform Union citizenship is established for citizens of the USSR. Every citizen of a Union Republic is a citizen of the USSR.

*Article 22*

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic includes the Bashkirian, Buryat, Checheno-Ingush, Chuvash, Dagestan, Kabardinian-Balkar, Kalmyk, Karelian, Komi, Mari, Mordovian, North Ossetian, Tatar, Tuva, Udmurt and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics; and the Adygei, Gorny Altai, Jewish, Karachai-Cherkess and Khakass Autonomous Regions.

*Article 23*

*Repealed.*

*Article 24*

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Region.

*Article 25*

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Abkhazian and Ajarian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region.

*Article 26*

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

*Article 27*

The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Gorny Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

*Article 28*

The settlement of questions pertaining to the regional or territorial administrative division of the Union Republics comes within the jurisdiction of the Union Republics.

*Article 29*

*Repealed.*

**Chapter III**

**THE HIGHER ORGANS OF STATE POWER  
IN THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*Article 30*

The highest organ of state power in the USSR is the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 31*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR exercises all rights vested in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitution, in so far as they do not, by virtue of the Constitution, come within the jurisdiction of organs of the USSR that are accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, that is, the Pre-

sidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and the Ministries of the USSR.

*Article 32*

The legislative power of the USSR is exercised exclusively by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 33*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR consists of two Chambers: the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

*Article 34*

The Soviet of the Union is elected by the citizens of the USSR voting by election districts on the basis of one deputy for every 300,000 of the population.

*Article 35*

The Soviet of Nationalities is elected by the citizens of the USSR voting by Union Republics, Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions, and National Areas on the basis of 32 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 deputies from each Autonomous Republic, 5 deputies from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each National Area.

*Article 36*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR is elected for a term of four years.

*Article 37*

The two Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, have equal rights.

*Article 38*

The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities have equal powers to initiate legislation.

*Article 39*

A law is considered adopted if passed by both Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR by a simple majority vote in each.

*Article 40*

Laws passed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are published in the languages of the Union Republics over the signatures of the President and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 41*

Sessions of the Soviet of the Union and of the Soviet of Nationalities begin and terminate simultaneously.

*Article 42*

The Soviet of the Union elects a Chairman of the Soviet of the Union and four Vice-Chairmen.

*Article 43*

The Soviet of Nationalities elects a Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities and four Vice-Chairmen.

*Article 44*

The Chairmen of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities preside at the sittings of the respective Chambers and have charge of the conduct of their business and proceedings.

*Article 45*

Joint sittings of the two Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are presided over alternately by the Chairman of the Soviet of the Union and the Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities.

*Article 46*

Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR twice a year.

Extraordinary sessions are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its discretion or on the demand of one of the Union Republics.

*Article 47*

In the event of disagreement between the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, the question is referred for settlement to a conciliation commission formed by the Chambers on a parity basis. If the conciliation commission fails to arrive at an agreement or if its decision fails to satisfy one of the Chambers, the question is considered for a second time by the Chambers. Failing agreement between the two Chambers, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dissolves the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and orders new elections.

*Article 48*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR at a joint sitting of the two Chambers elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, consisting of a President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, fifteen Vice-Presidents—one from each Union Republic, a Secretary of the Presidium and twenty members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for all its activities.

*Article 49*

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR:

- a) Convenes the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;
- b) Issues ordinances;
- c) Interprets the laws of the USSR in operation;
- d) Dissolves the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in conformity with Article 47 of the Constitution of the USSR and orders new elections;
- e) Conducts nation-wide polls (referendums) on its own initiative or on the demand of one of the Union Republics;
- f) Annuls decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and of the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics if they do not conform to law;
- g) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, appoints or removes Ministers of the USSR on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, subject to subsequent confirmation by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;

- h) Institutes decorations (Orders and Medals) and titles of honour of the USSR;
- i) Awards Orders and Medals and confers titles of honour of the USSR;
- j) Exercises the right of pardon;
- k) Institutes military titles, diplomatic ranks and other special titles;
- l) Appoints and removes the high command of the Armed Forces of the USSR;
- m) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, proclaims a state of war in the event of an armed attack on the USSR, or when necessary to fulfil international treaty obligations providing for mutual defence against aggression;
- n) Orders general or partial mobilisation;
- o) Ratifies and denounces international treaties of the USSR;
- p) Appoints and recalls plenipotentiary representatives of the USSR to foreign states;
- q) Receives the letters of credence and recall of diplomatic representatives accredited to it by foreign states;
- r) Proclaims martial law in separate localities or throughout the USSR in the interests of the defence of the USSR or of the maintenance of law and order and the security of the state.

#### *Article 50*

The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities elect Credentials Committees to verify the credentials of the members of the respective Chambers.

On the report of the Credentials Committees, the Chambers decide whether to recognise the credentials of deputies or to annul their election.

#### *Article 51*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, when it deems necessary, appoints commissions of inquiry and audit on any matter.

It is the duty of all institutions and officials to comply with the demands of such commissions and to submit to them all necessary materials and documents.

#### *Article 52*

No member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be prosecuted or arrested without the consent of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR,

or, when the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is not in session, without the consent of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 53*

On the expiry of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, or on its dissolution prior to the expiry of its term of office, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR retains its powers until the newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall have formed a new Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 54*

On the expiry of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, or in the event of its dissolution prior to the expiry of its term of office, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR orders new elections to be held within a period not exceeding two months from the date of expiry of the term of office or dissolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 55*

The newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR is convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR not later than three months after the elections.

*Article 56*

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, at a joint sitting of the two Chambers, appoints the Government of the USSR, namely, the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

## **Chapter IV**

### **THE HIGHER ORGANS OF STATE POWER IN THE UNION REPUBLICS**

*Article 57*

The highest organ of state power in a Union Republic is the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

### *Article 58*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic is elected by the citizens of the Republic for a term of four years.

The basis of representation is established by the Constitution of the Union Republic.

### *Article 59*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic is the sole legislative organ of the Republic.

### *Article 60*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic:

- a) Adopts the Constitution of the Republic and amends it in conformity with Article 16 of the Constitution of the USSR;
- b) Confirms the Constitutions of the Autonomous Republics forming part of it and defines the boundaries of their territory;
- c) Approves the economic plan and the budget of the Republic;
- d) Exercises the right of amnesty and pardon of citizens sentenced by the judicial bodies of the Union Republic;
- e) Decides upon the representation of the Union Republic in its international relations;
- f) Determines the manner of organising the Republic's military formations.

### *Article 61*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, consisting of the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, Vice-Presidents, a Secretary of the Presidium and members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

The powers of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic are defined by the Constitution of the Union Republic.

### *Article 62*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairmen to conduct its sittings.

### *Article 63*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic appoints the Government of the Union Republic, namely, the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic.

**Chapter V**  
**THE ORGANS OF STATE ADMINISTRATION**  
**OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*Article 64*

The highest executive and administrative organ of the state power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

*Article 65*

The Council of Ministers of the USSR is responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, or, in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 66*

The Council of Ministers of the USSR issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation, and verifies their execution.

*Article 67*

Decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR are binding throughout the territory of the USSR.

*Article 68*

The Council of Ministers of the USSR:

- a) Coordinates and directs the work of the all-Union and Union-Republican Ministries of the USSR, the State Committees of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and of other bodies under its jurisdiction;
- b) Adopts measures to carry out the economic plan and the state budget, and to strengthen the credit and monetary system;
- c) Adopts measures for the maintenance of law and order, for the protection of the interests of the state, and for the safeguarding of the rights of citizens;
- d) Exercises general guidance in the sphere of relations with foreign states;
- e) Fixes the annual contingent of citizens to be called up for military service and directs the general organisation of the Armed Forces of the country;

f) Sets up State Committees of the USSR, and, whenever necessary, special Committees and Central Boards under the Council of Ministers of the USSR for economic and cultural affairs and defence.

#### *Article 69*

The Council of Ministers of the USSR has the right, in respect of those branches of administration and economy which come within the jurisdiction of the USSR, to suspend decisions and orders of the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics and to annul orders and instructions of Ministers of the USSR and also statutory acts of other bodies under its jurisdiction.

#### *Article 70*

The Council of Ministers of the USSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and consists of:

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

First Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Building Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Material and Technical Supply;

Chairman of the People's Control Committee of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Labour and Social Affairs;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Science and Technology;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Inventions and Discoveries;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Prices;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Standards;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Vocational Training;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Television and Broadcasting;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Cinematography;

Chairman of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Publishing, Printing and Book Trade;

Chairman of the State Forestry Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the State Security Committee under the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the "Soyuzselkhoztekhnika" All-Union Association of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

Chairman of the Administrative Board of the State Bank of the USSR;

Chief of the Central Statistical Board under the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

The Council of Ministers of the USSR includes the Chairmen of the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics by virtue of their office.

#### *Article 71*

The Government of the USSR or a Minister of the USSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the respective Chamber within a period not exceeding three days.

#### *Article 72*

The Ministers of the USSR direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the USSR.

#### *Article 73*

The Ministers of the USSR, within the limits of the jurisdiction of their respective Ministries, issue orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation, and also of decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and verify their execution.

#### *Article 74*

The Ministries of the USSR are either all-Union or Union-Republican Ministries.

### *Article 75*

The all-Union Ministries direct the branch of state administration entrusted to them throughout the territory of the USSR either directly or through bodies appointed by them.

### *Article 76*

The Union-Republican Ministries, as a rule, direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them through the relevant Ministries of the Union Republics; they administer directly only a certain limited number of enterprises according to a list approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

### *Article 77*

The following are all-Union Ministries:

- Ministry of the Aircraft Industry;
- Ministry of the Automobile Industry;
- Ministry of Foreign Trade;
- Ministry of the Gas Industry;
- Ministry of Civil Aviation;
- Ministry of Engineering;
- Ministry of Machine-Building for Livestock Breeding and Fodder Production;
- Ministry of Machine-Building for the Light and Food Industries and Household Appliances;
- Ministry of the Medical Industry;
- Ministry of the Merchant Marine;
- Ministry of the Oil Industry;
- Ministry of the Defence Industry;
- Ministry of General Engineering;
- Ministry of Instrument-Making, Means of Automation and Control Systems;
- Ministry of Means of Communication;
- Ministry of Railways;
- Ministry of the Radio Industry;
- Ministry of Medium Machine-Building;
- Ministry of the Tool-Making Industry;
- Ministry of Building, Road and Communal Machinery;
- Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry Construction;
- Ministry of Shipbuilding;
- Ministry of Tractor and Agricultural Machinery Building;

Ministry of Transport Building;  
Ministry of Heavy and Transport Engineering;  
Ministry of Chemical and Oil Machine-Building;  
Ministry of the Chemical Industry;  
Ministry of the Pulp and Paper Industry;  
Ministry of the Electronic Industry;  
Ministry of Electrotechnical Engineering;  
Ministry of Power Engineering.

*Article 78*

The following are Union-Republican Ministries:

Ministry of Internal Affairs;  
Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education;  
Ministry of Geology;  
Ministry of Procurement;  
Ministry of Public Health;  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs;  
Ministry of Culture;  
Ministry of the Light Industry;  
Ministry of the Timber and Woodworking Industry;  
Ministry of Melioration and Water Conservance;  
Ministry of Assembly and Specialised Building Work;  
Ministry of the Meat-Packing and Dairy Industry;  
Ministry of the Oil Refining and Petrochemical Industry;  
Ministry of Defence;  
Ministry of the Food Industry;  
Ministry of Industrial Construction;  
Ministry of the Building Materials Industry;  
Ministry of Public Education;  
Ministry of Fisheries;  
Ministry of Communications;  
Ministry of Rural Construction;  
Ministry of Agriculture;  
Ministry of Construction;  
Ministry of Heavy Industry Construction;  
Ministry of Trade;  
Ministry of the Coal Industry;  
Ministry of Finance;  
Ministry of Non-ferrous Metallurgy;  
Ministry of Ferrous Metallurgy;  
Ministry of Electric Power Development and Electrification;  
Ministry of Justice.

## Chapter VI

### THE ORGANS OF STATE ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNION REPUBLICS

#### *Article 79*

The highest executive and administrative organ of the state power of a Union Republic is the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic.

#### *Article 80*

The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic is responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, or, in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

#### *Article 81*

The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws of the USSR and of the Union Republic, and of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and verifies their execution.

#### *Article 82*

The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic has the right to suspend decisions and orders of the Councils of Ministers of its Autonomous Republics, and to annul decisions and orders of the Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of its Territories, Regions and Autonomous Regions.

#### *Article 83*

The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic and consists of:

Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic;  
Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers;  
Ministers;

Chairmen of State Committees, Commissions, and the heads of other departments of the Council of Ministers set up by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic in conformity with the Constitution of the Union Republic.

*Article 84*

The Ministers of a Union Republic direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the Union Republic.

*Article 85*

The Ministers of a Union Republic, within the limits of the jurisdiction of their respective Ministries, issue orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws of the USSR and of the Union Republic, of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic, and of the orders and instructions of the Union-Republican Ministries of the USSR.

*Article 86*

The Ministries of a Union Republic are either Union-Republican or Republican Ministries.

*Article 87*

Each Union-Republican Ministry directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it, and is subordinate both to the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic and to the corresponding Union-Republican Ministry of the USSR.

*Article 88*

Each Republican Ministry directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it, is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic.

## **Chapter VII**

### **THE HIGHER ORGANS OF STATE POWER IN THE AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*Article 89*

The highest organ of state power in an Autonomous Republic is the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic.

#### *Article 90*

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic is elected by the citizens of the Republic for a term of four years on a basis of representation established by the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic.

#### *Article 91*

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic is the sole legislative organ of the Autonomous Republic.

#### *Article 92*

Each Autonomous Republic has its own Constitution, which takes account of the specific features of the Autonomous Republic and is drawn up in full conformity with the Constitution of the Union Republic.

#### *Article 93*

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic and appoints the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic, in accordance with its Constitution.

### **Chapter VIII**

#### **THE LOCAL ORGANS OF STATE POWER**

#### *Article 94*

The organs of state power in Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions, Areas, Districts, cities and rural localities (stanitsas, villages, hamlets, kishlaks, auls) are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

#### *Article 95*

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions, Areas, Districts, cities and rural localities (stanitsas, villages, hamlets, kishlaks, auls) are elected by the working people of the respective Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions, Areas, Districts, cities and rural localities for a term of two years.

*Article 96*

The basis of representation for Soviets of Working People's Deputies is determined by the Constitutions of the Union Republics.

*Article 97*

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, the observance of the laws, protect the rights of citizens, direct local economic and cultural affairs and draw up and approve local budgets.

*Article 98*

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and of the Union Republic.

*Article 99*

The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a Territory, Region, Autonomous Region, Area, District, city or rural locality is the Executive Committee elected by it, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and members.

*Article 100*

The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies in a small locality, in accordance with the Constitution of the Union Republic, is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by the Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 101*

The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organ of the superior Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

## Chapter IX

### THE COURTS AND THE PROCURATOR'S OFFICE

#### *Article 102*

In the USSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the USSR, the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics, the Courts of the Territories, Regions, Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and Areas, the Special Courts of the USSR, established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

#### *Article 103*

In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

#### *Article 104*

The Supreme Court of the USSR is the highest judicial organ. The Supreme Court of the USSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial bodies of the USSR and of the Union Republics within the limits established by law.

#### *Article 105*

The Supreme Court of the USSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for a term of five years.

The Supreme Court of the USSR includes the Chairmen of the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics by virtue of their office.

#### *Article 106*

The Supreme Courts of the Union Republics are elected by the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics for a term of five years.

#### *Article 107*

The Supreme Courts of the Autonomous Republics are elected by the Supreme Soviets of the Autonomous Republics for a term of five years.

#### *Article 108*

The Courts of Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions and Areas are elected by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the re-

spective Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions or Areas for a term of five years.

*Article 109*

People's Judges of District (City) People's Courts are elected by the citizens of the districts (cities) on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a term of five years.

People's Assessors of District (City) People's Courts are elected at general meetings of industrial, office and professional workers, and peasants in the place of their work or residence, and of servicemen in military units, for a term of two years.

*Article 110*

Judicial proceedings are conducted in the language of the Union Republic, Autonomous Republic or Autonomous Region, persons not knowing this language being guaranteed the opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

*Article 111*

In all Courts of the USSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to defence.

*Article 112*

Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

*Article 113*

Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by people in office and citizens of the USSR generally, is vested in the Procurator-General of the USSR.

*Article 114*

The Procurator-General of the USSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for a term of seven years.

### *Article 115*

Procurators of Republics, Territories, Regions, Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

### *Article 116*

Area, district and city procurators are appointed by the Procurators of the Union Republics, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

### *Article 117*

The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of all local bodies, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

## **Chapter X**

### **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENS**

### *Article 118*

Citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organisation of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

### *Article 119*

Citizens of the USSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of a seven-hour day for industrial, office, and professional workers, the reduction of the working day to six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where conditions of work are particularly arduous; by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for industrial, office, and professional workers, and by placing a wide network of sanatoriums, holiday homes and clubs at the disposal of the working people.

#### *Article 120*

Citizens of the USSR have the right to maintenance in old age and in case of sickness or disability.

This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of industrial, office and professional workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people, and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

#### *Article 121*

Citizens of the USSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal compulsory eight-year education; by extensive development of secondary polytechnical education, vocational-technical education, and secondary specialised and higher education based on close ties between the school, real life and production activities; by the utmost development of evening and extramural education; by free education in all schools; by a system of state scholarship grants; by instruction in schools in the native language, and by the organisation of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people in the factories, state farms, and collective farms.

#### *Article 122*

Women in the USSR are accorded all rights on an equal footing with men in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political, and other social activity.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured by women being accorded the same rights as men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and also by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

#### *Article 123*

Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, government, cultural, political and other social activity, is an infeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on ac-

count of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, are punishable by law.

#### *Article 124*

In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the USSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

#### *Article 125*

In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law:

- a) freedom of speech;
- b) freedom of the press;
- c) freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
- d) freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organisations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

#### *Article 126*

In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the USSR are guaranteed the right to unite in mass organisations—trade unions, co-operative societies, youth organisations, sport and defence organisations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically-conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class, working peasants and working intelligentsia voluntarily unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to build communist society and is the leading core of all organisations of the working people, both government and non-government.

#### *Article 127*

Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person shall be placed under arrest except by decision of a court of law or with the sanction of a procurator.

*Article 128*

The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

*Article 129*

The USSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for scientific activities, or for struggling for national liberation.

*Article 130*

It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to abide by the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist society.

*Article 131*

It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to safeguard and fortify public, socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing crimes in respect of public, socialist property are enemies of the people.

*Article 132*

Universal military service is law.

Military service in the Armed Forces of the USSR is the honourable duty of citizens of the USSR.

*Article 133*

To defend the country is the sacred duty of every citizen of the USSR. Treason to the Motherland—violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage—is punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous of crimes.

## Chapter XI

### THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

#### *Article 134*

Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies—of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Territories and Regions, the Supreme Soviets of the Autonomous Republics, the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Autonomous Regions, and the Area, District, city and rural (stanitsa, village, hamlet, kishlak, aul) Soviets of Working People's Deputies—are elected on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

#### *Article 135*

Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the USSR who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies, with the exception of persons who have been legally certified insane.

Every citizen of the USSR who has reached the age of twenty-three is eligible for election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, education, domicile, social origin, property status or past activities.

#### *Article 136*

Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

#### *Article 137*

Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

#### *Article 138*

Citizens serving in the Armed Forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

#### *Article 139*

Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to

the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

*Article 140*

Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

*Article 141*

Candidates are nominated for each constituency.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to mass organisations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organisations, trade unions, co-operatives, youth organisations and cultural societies.

*Article 142*

It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electorate on his work and on the work of his Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he may be recalled at any time upon decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

## **Chapter XII**

### **ARMS, FLAG, CAPITAL**

*Article 143*

The arms of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are a sickle and hammer against a globe depicted in the rays of the sun and surrounded by ears of grain, with the inscription "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the languages of the Union Republics. At the top of the arms is a five-pointed star.

*Article 144*

The state flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is of red cloth with the sickle and hammer depicted in gold in the upper corner near the staff and above them a five-pointed red star bordered in gold. The ratio of width to length is 1:2.

*Article 145*

The capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the City of Moscow.

## Chapter XIII

### PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

#### *Article 146*

Amendments to the Constitution of the USSR shall be adopted by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes in each of the Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Adopted by the Extraordinary  
8th Congress of Soviets of the  
USSR on 5 December 1936  
(amended and supplemented)

*Konstitutsiya SSSR. Konstitutsii soyuznykh respublik* (Constitution of the USSR. Constitutions of Union Republics), Izvestiya Publishers, Moscow, 1972.

#### RESOLUTION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY EIGHTH ALL-GEORGIA CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

#### ON THE DISSOLUTION OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

The Extraordinary Eighth All-Georgia Congress of Soviets notes with great satisfaction that the Transcaucasian Federation has played its historic part in the political and economic life of the peoples of Transcaucasia by establishing lasting national peace and fraternal cooperation between the peoples of Transcaucasia and securing the triumph of socialist construction in the republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The peoples of Transcaucasia, liberated by the Great October Socialist Revolution from the yoke of imperialist interventionists and their hirelings and the people's traitors—Mensheviks, Dashnaks and Mussavatists, created on 12 March 1922 the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic on the initiative of Lenin, the great leader of the working class, in order to unite their efforts to defend the gains of the socialist revolution, to abolish chaos and dislocation and advance the economy, to rout the counter-revolutionary, anti-Soviet parties and to establish peace among the nationalities and develop their close fraternal cooperation.

The Transcaucasian Federation has fulfilled the historic tasks it was set.

Soviet power has scored victories in socialist construction in Transcaucasia under the leadership of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), under the banner of Leninist nationalities policy. Soviet power has

built a powerful industry in the Transcaucasian republics and transformed them into advanced industrial-agrarian republics.

The collective-farm system has triumphed in the rural areas of Transcaucasia once and for all. Hundreds upon hundreds of collective farms have grown in strength and ensure the collective farmers a prosperous life on the basis of collective-farm rules.

The culture of the Transcaucasian peoples, national in form and socialist in content, has unprecedentedly flourished.

The people's enemies—the counter-revolutionary parties of Mensheviks, Mussavatists and Dashnaks—have been defeated once and for all. Fraternity and indissoluble friendship among nations have been established in the relations between the peoples of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

By creating and strengthening the Transcaucasian Federation, an organ of national peace, which was impossible and unknown under the bourgeois system, the workers, peasants and the toiling intelligentsia of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia have achieved their historic victories in socialist construction.

The victory of socialism in the Transcaucasian republics has created the requisite conditions for the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation at the present stage of historical development of the great Soviet Union.

By virtue of the growing socialist economy and culture the Transcaucasian republics—Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan—now have the broadest economic and cultural ties not only between themselves, but also with the other republics of the USSR, which has given each republic a new status in the fraternal family of the peoples of the Soviet Union and created the necessary conditions for the Transcaucasian republics' accession to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The new Constitution opens up great prospects for the Transcaucasian republics' growth and efflorescence and raises to a new level the indissoluble fraternal union of the Transcaucasian peoples.

Proceeding from the foregoing, the Extraordinary Eighth All-Georgia Congress of Soviets *resolves*:

That in accordance with Article 13 of the Constitution of the USSR that provides for the direct accession of the Azerbaijan SSR, the Georgian SSR and the Armenian SSR to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics it be considered necessary to dissolve the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and its governing bodies, as having performed their historic function.

13 February 1937

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 6,  
1964, p. 601

RESOLUTION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY NINTH ALL-AZERBAIJAN CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS

ON THE DISSOLUTION  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

Having heard the communication on the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Ninth Extraordinary All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets notes with great satisfaction that the Transcaucasian Federation has played a major historic role in the political and economic life of the peoples of Transcaucasia by securing lasting national peace, fraternal community and cooperation between its peoples and by achieving victory in the socialist construction in the republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia.

The peoples of Transcaucasia, freed by the Great October Socialist Revolution from the yoke of tsarism, imperialist interventionists and their hirelings and traitors of the people—the Mussavatists, Dashnaks and Mensheviks, created on 12 March 1922 the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic in order to unite their efforts to defend the gains of the socialist revolution, to eliminate chaos and dislocation, to advance the economy, to rout the counter-revolutionary parties and to establish close fraternal community and cooperation.

The Transcaucasian Federation has fulfilled the historic tasks it was set. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, under the banner of the Leninist nationalities policy, the Soviet government has won brilliant victories in socialist construction on the basis of the Transcaucasian Federation. Relying on the Federation, the Transcaucasian Republics have created a powerful industry, turned into advanced industrial-agrarian republics and secured the rapid growth of their creative and productive forces.

The collective-farm system has once and for all triumphed in rural areas. Hundreds upon hundreds of collective farms have grown in strength on the basis of collective-farm Rules and ensure the prosperity of collective farmers.

The culture of the Transcaucasian peoples, socialist in content and national in form, has unprecedentedly flourished.

The Transcaucasian Federation has helped put an end to all vestiges of former national discord and enmity. The people's enemies—the murderous counter-revolutionary nationalist parties of the Mussavatists, Dashnaks and Mensheviks—have been routed once and for all. Brotherhood and unbreakable friendship have been established in the

relations between the peoples of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia.

By creating and strengthening the Transcaucasian Federation, an organ of national peace, which was impossible and unknown under the bourgeois system, the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, the workers, peasants and toiling intellectuals of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, have developed their fraternal cooperation and thus won their historic victories in socialist construction. . . .

The great achievements of the republics of the Transcaucasian Federation have created all the conditions for the dissolution of this Federation.

Today the Transcaucasian republics—Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia—with their rapidly growing socialist economy and culture maintain the broadest possible economic and cultural ties not only among themselves, but also with the other republics of the USSR. The development of these direct relations of the Transcaucasian federative republics with the other republics of the Soviet Union has given each of these republics quite a new status in the fraternal family of the peoples of the Soviet Union and has created the necessary conditions for the direct accession of the Azerbaijan, Georgian and Armenian Republics to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The new Constitution opens up great prospects for the further growth and flourishing of the Transcaucasian republics, for a still greater consolidation of their indissoluble union.

Acting on the foregoing, the Extraordinary Ninth All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets *resolves*:

That in accordance with Article 13 of the Constitution of the USSR that provides for the direct accession of the Azerbaijan, Georgian and Armenian Soviet Socialist Republics to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, it be considered necessary to dissolve the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and its governing bodies, as having fully performed their historic function.

14 March 1937.

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 6,  
1964, p. 278

RESOLUTION  
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY NINTH CONGRESS  
OF SOVIETS OF ARMENIA  
ON THE DISSOLUTION  
OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE  
SOVIET REPUBLIC

The extraordinary Ninth Congress of Soviets of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, having heard the communication on the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, notes

with great satisfaction that the Transcaucasian Federation has played a major historic role in the political and economic life of the Transcaucasian peoples. It has introduced lasting national peace among the Transcaucasian nations and strengthened their solidarity and fraternal cooperation, as well as the triumphant building of socialism in the Georgian, Azerbaijan and Armenian Republics.

The Transcaucasian peoples, freed by the Great October Socialist Revolution from the yoke of tsarist autocracy and the agents and hirelings of imperialism, villainous and despicable enemies of the people—the Dashnaks, Mensheviks and Mussavatists, created on 12 March 1922 the Transcaucasian Federation on the initiative of Lenin, the great leader of the proletariat, for the purpose of uniting all their forces to defend their revolutionary gains, to rehabilitate the ravaged economy, to eliminate the counter-revolutionary anti-Soviet parties, and to establish fraternal solidarity and international peace among the peoples of Transcaucasia.

The Transcaucasian Federation has fulfilled this historic task with honour.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, under the banner of the Leninist nationalities policy the Soviet power in Transcaucasia has achieved tremendous victories on all socialist fronts. The Soviet government has set up a powerful industry and turned Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia into advanced, industrial-agrarian republics. The collective-farm system has triumphed once and for all in the Transcaucasian rural areas. Thousands of collective farms are growing, becoming prosperous and cultured.

The cultures of all the peoples of Transcaucasia, national in form and socialist in content, have unprecedentedly flourished.

Indissoluble fraternity and cooperation have been established in the relations between the multinational republics of Transcaucasia. The foul enemies of the people, the Dashnak, the Mussavatist and the Menshevik parties, have been routed.

The workers, peasants and the labouring intellectuals of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan have achieved these great historic victories through the creation and consolidation of the Transcaucasian Federation.

The victory of socialism in the Transcaucasian republics has prepared and created all the necessary conditions for the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federation at the present stage of the Soviet Union's historical development.

The new Constitution opens up before all the Transcaucasian republics great prospects for further growth and development and consolidates still more the fraternal bonds and union of their peoples.

Proceeding from all this, the Extraordinary Ninth Congress of Soviets of Armenia *resolves*:

That according to Article 13 of the Constitution of the USSR, which provides for the direct accession of the Azerbaijan SSR, the Georgian SSR and the Armenian SSR to the USSR, it be considered necessary to dissolve the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and its governing bodies, as having performed their historic function.

23 March 1937

*Syezdy Sovietov v dokumentakh*, Vol. 6,  
1964, p. 463

Chapter IX  
**FURTHER EVOLUTION OF THE USSR  
AS A FEDERAL STATE**

DECLARATION  
OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY  
OF THE WESTERN UKRAINE

**ON STATE POWER IN THE WESTERN UKRAINE**

*(Excerpt)*

Expressing the unanimous will of the liberated people of the Western Ukraine and following the example of the peoples of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian People's Assembly proclaims the establishment of Soviet power throughout the entire territory of the Western Ukraine.

Henceforth, all power in the Western Ukraine shall belong to the working people in town and countryside as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Ukrainian People's Assembly declares the unbending will of the people of the Western Ukraine to protect and defend the power of the Soviets from all encroachments wherever these might originate from.

The Ukrainian People's Assembly expresses its unshakeable confidence that the establishment of Soviet power guided by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks will lead to the advance of the productive forces, national wealth and culture in the interests of the people of the Western Ukraine.

27 October 1939

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR*, 28 October 1939,  
No. 250

DECLARATION  
OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY  
OF THE WESTERN UKRAINE

**ON THE WESTERN UKRAINE'S ACCESSION  
TO THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

At gatherings, assemblies and meetings, the people are unanimously expressing their unbending will to unite with the fraternal family

of the peoples of the Soviet Union and to join the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. This is because only in the Soviet Union, where all power belongs to the workers and the peasants, has the exploitation of man by man been eliminated and mutual help been established between all peoples in all areas of economic and social life. This is because only in the Soviet Union is it possible for every nation to have its culture blossom as a truly national culture for the people. This is because only in the Soviet Union the feeling of mutual distrust among the peoples has completely vanished, and because friendship among the peoples has grown and gained strength to replace the national discord cultivated by the bourgeoisie.

In the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is prospering. Hundreds of powerful factories and other industries have been built, with the working class who labour in them experiencing no exploitation. Possessing all land and cultivating it with the most up-to-date machines, the Ukrainian peasantry has grown and become economically powerful. Soviet power and the Communist Party have created every condition for the advance of a genuinely national Ukrainian culture.

Ukrainian is an official language. The sons and daughters of the peoples inhabiting the Soviet land hold leading posts in all areas of political, economic, cultural and public life. The young people of the Soviet Ukraine have been given every opportunity to study and master the heights of knowledge in their own language.

The people of the Western Ukraine know this.

Serving as a voice expressing the single-minded will and aspirations of the people of the Western Ukraine, the Ukrainian People's Assembly resolves:

to petition the USSR Supreme Soviet to allow the Western Ukraine to join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and to incorporate the Western Ukraine in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, thereby re-uniting the Ukrainian people in a single state and ending the centuries of disunity among the Ukrainian people.

The People's Assembly expresses the firm confidence that the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will grant this request from the people of the Western Ukraine who will thereupon march, being guided by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, along the road of a new and happy life as part of the united and friendly family of the peoples of the USSR.

27 October 1939

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhssya SSSR*, 28 October 1939, No. 250

DECLARATION  
OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN BYELORUSSIA

ON STATE POWER

*(Excerpt)*

The peoples of the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have extended their hand of fraternal assistance and forever freed the working people of Western Byelorussia from the yoke of the political, social and national oppression. For the first time, the people of Western Byelorussia have received the right to determine their destinies themselves.

As the sole legitimate spokesman of the will of the people of Western Byelorussia, the Byelorussian People's (National) Assembly has been called upon to decide on the nature of state power to be established throughout the territory of Western Byelorussia.

Deciding on the nature of state power to be established, we address ourselves to the example of the great Soviet Union. At this hour of severe trial for our people, it is Soviet power alone which has been as a saviour to us, and a powerful and trustworthy defender. The great historical experience of the peoples of the Soviet Union teaches us that only Soviet power is genuine people's power under which the country is governed by the people without landlords or capitalists.

In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, hired slavery has been abolished forever, and the exploitation of man by man eliminated. Every working person has been granted the right to work, the right to rest and leisure, the right to material maintenance in old age, and the right to education. Concern for the welfare of man is the guiding principle of life.

Regardless of race, nationality, religion, education, residence, social or property status, all working people in the Soviet land have the right to vote for and to be elected to all bodies of state power. Women enjoy the franchise on an equal basis with men. The broadest masses of the people are taking part in government.

In the USSR, national oppression and inequality have been abolished forever. All the peoples of the Soviet Union form a united, well-knit family. Only in the Soviet Union has culture prospered with tremendous force among all the peoples. There are no longer backward nationalities in the Soviet Union.

The example of the Soviet Union and the bitter experience of our own life under landlord Poland convince us that only Soviet power can deliver the people of Western Byelorussia from exploitation, privation, hunger and lack of rights. Only Soviet power can ensure our

political, economic and cultural prosperity, and guarantee freedom for the national development for all the people of Western Byelorussia.

Expressing the unbending will and desire of the people of Western Byelorussia, the Byelorussian People's Assembly proclaims the establishment of Soviet power throughout the territory of Western Byelorussia. Henceforth, all power throughout Western Byelorussia shall belong to the working people in town and in the countryside as represented by the Soviets of the Working People's Deputies.

The Byelorussian People's Assembly is confident that the entire population of Western Byelorussia will rally round the Soviets of the Working People's Deputies to ensure a complete victory for the new system, and successes in the economy, culture and well-being of the people of Western Byelorussia.

29 October 1939

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudya-shchikhsya SSSR*, 30 October 1939,  
No. 252

DECLARATION  
OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY  
OF WESTERN BYELORUSSIA

**ON WESTERN BYELORUSSIA'S ACCESSION  
TO THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

In the severe hour which threatened the ruin and destruction of our people, the great Soviet Union has taken under its protection the life and property of the population of Western Byelorussia.

Assisted by the invincible Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, the people of Western Byelorussia have freed themselves from domination by landlords and capitalists. Gone forever are the dark years when the Byelorussian people were languishing under the yoke of the Polish landlords who brutally trampled the basic rights and national dignity of the Byelorussian people.

The working people of Western Byelorussia have always considered themselves to be linked by bonds of blood with their brothers who have built Soviet Socialist Byelorussia.

The working people of Western Byelorussia resolutely demand reunion between the previously divided two parts of the single Byelorussian nation, the single Byelorussian land.

Considering the will of the Byelorussian people to be the supreme law, the Byelorussian People's Assembly resolves:

to petition the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Re-

publics and the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic to allow Western Byelorussia to join the Soviet Union and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to re-unite the Byelorussian people in a single state, and, in this way, to end the disunity of the Byelorussian people.

Only as part of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic can the people of Western Byelorussia heal the deep wounds inflicted during the long years of enslavement, and, with the help of the mighty Soviet Union, to raise and transform the economy, develop its national culture worthy of a free people, and ensure growth in the welfare of all the working people of Western Byelorussia.

Long live the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic!

Long live our powerful Motherland—the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics!

29 October 1939

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR*, 30 October 1939, No. 252

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

**ON THE ADMISSION OF THE WESTERN UKRAINE  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS,  
RE-UNITING IT WITH THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, having heard the petition of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine, *has resolved*:

1. To grant the request of the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine and to admit the Western Ukraine to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, re-uniting it with the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

1 November 1939

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovietsa SSSR*, 1939, No. 36

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
**ON THE ADMISSION OF WESTERN BYELORUSSIA  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS,  
RE-UNITING IT WITH THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, having heard the petition of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia, *has resolved*:

1. To grant the request of the People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia and include Western Byelorussia in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, re-uniting it with the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

2 November 1939

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1939, No. 36

LAW  
OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
**ON THE ADMISSION OF WESTERN BYELORUSSIA  
TO THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, having heard the petition of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia, *has resolved*:

2. To admit Western Byelorussia to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and thereby re-unite the great Byelorussian people in a single Byelorussian state.

14 November 1939

*Sbornik zakonov Byelorusskoy SSR,*  
Vol. 1, 1968, p. 49

LAW  
OF THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
**ON THE ADMISSION OF THE WESTERN UKRAINE  
TO THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, having heard the petition of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine, *has resolved*:

2. To admit the Western Ukraine to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and thereby re-unite the great Ukrainian people in a single Ukrainian state.

15 November 1939

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhssya SSSR*, 16 November 1939, No. 264

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

**ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE KARELIAN AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC INTO A UNION REPUBLIC—THE KARELO-FINNISH SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

In response to the wishes of the working people of the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and guided by the principle of the free development of nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics *resolves*:

2. That the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic be transformed into a Union Republic—the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic.

31 March 1940

Verbatim Report of the Sixth Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 1940 (in Russian)

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

**ON THE INCLUSION OF THE NORTHERN PART OF BUKOVINA AND THE KHOTIN, AKKERMANN AND IZMAIL UYEZDS OF BESSARABIA IN THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics *resolves*:

1. That the Northern part of Bukovina, the Khotin, Akkerman and Izmail uyezds of Bessarabia be included in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

2 August 1940

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*, 1940, No. 28

DECLARATION  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SEJM  
**ON STATE POWER IN LITHUANIA**

*(Excerpt)*

14 and 15 July 1940 are great historic days in the life of the working people of Lithuania. They have laid the foundation of the alliance between the working class, peasantry and labouring intelligentsia and heralded the victory of the platform of the League of Lithuania's Working People, which strongly rallied all honest patriots of our country, all those who cherish the interests of the Lithuanian people.

These days the Lithuanian people express their will to put an end for ever to the political rule of landlords and capitalists, to establish genuinely popular rule, and to embark on the path of reorganising the state machinery in the country.

The victory of the League of Lithuania's Working People is an historic change in the country's life which gives the working people full civil and political rights and opens up a bright future for them and coming generations.

The national Sejm, as the sovereign mouthpiece of the Lithuanian people's will that is called upon to consolidate their victories over the plutocratic regime, considers the settlement, in a new way, of the question of the nature of state power in Lithuania to be its basic task and duty.

The great historical experience of the peoples of the Soviet Union teaches us that Soviet power alone genuinely expresses and protects the working people's interests. Soviet power alone is truly popular power under which the people themselves govern the country and dispense with capitalists and landlords. The Soviets alone embody the worker-and-peasant alliance.

The Soviet Union has abolished for ever the exploitation of man by man. Concern for man is the guiding principle of life in the USSR. Every working man in the USSR has the right to work, to rest and leisure, to free education and free medical aid, and to material security in old age.

Soviet power is the most democratic state power. The experience of capitalist countries shows that any other power means the domination and unlimited arbitrary rule of a handful of exploiters over the great majority of the people.

Through the Soviets all working people enjoy full rights in administering the state and creating freedom and a happy life for all the working people. Only Soviet power creates conditions for promoting leaders and organisers from among the people for different sectors of

state, economic and social life, for the flourishing of the people's abilities and talents. There is no national oppression or national inequality in the Soviet Union. This terrible legacy of the past has been destroyed there once and for all. For Lithuania where the deposed ruling clique have fanned national strife for years, the establishment of Soviet power is the only and surest pledge of national equality and free national development for all the peoples residing in Lithuania. Only Soviet government can provide us with peace, work and freedom and rid the working masses in town and countryside of exploitation, destitution and lawlessness. The example of the Soviet Union teaches us in this respect. Only Soviet power will secure our political, economic and cultural prosperity.

In expressing the unanimous will of the free working people of Lithuania, the Popular Sejm proclaims Soviet power throughout the territory of Lithuania.

Lithuania is declared a Soviet Socialist Republic. Henceforth all power in the Lithuanian SSR shall be vested in the working people of town and countryside as represented by Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Popular Sejm firmly believes that the whole population of Lithuania will rally around the Soviet authorities in order to secure the flourishing of its economy and culture, for the freedom and happiness of our people, and for the full victory of the people's cause.

21 July 1940

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR*, 23 July 1940, No. 168

DECLARATION  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SEJM  
ON THE ACCESSION OF LITHUANIA TO THE USSR

*(Excerpt)*

The Lithuanian people, who were mercilessly oppressed by exploiters, subject to plunder and violence, and doomed to poverty and extinction, have established a new state system in Lithuania, a system in which the people themselves are the sole master of their country. This system is the Soviet one. Lithuania has become a Soviet Socialist Republic.

For long years the Lithuanian workers and labouring intellectuals suffered from unemployment and lived in the grip of destitution without any rights.

The Lithuanian peasantry was oppressed by lack or shortage of

land, since the greater part of it had been seized by landlords and other big landowners.

...The Lithuanian people know in practice that all these years the Soviet Union has been conducting a most friendly policy towards them. The fact that Lithuania was not subdued by the Poland of gentry, that it received back its ancient capital—the city of Vilna, that Lithuania is a long way from the raging flames of the war, that the Lithuanian people have thrown off the yoke of the landlords and capitalists and acquired the possibility of establishing in their own country the only just political system—Soviet power, all this is thanks to the Soviet Union. That is why the Lithuanian people have always regarded their best future as lying in a closer union with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The criminal reactionary clique of the former rulers of Lithuania took great pains to prevent the fraternal rapprochement between the USSR and Lithuania, the establishment of a lasting, indissoluble union between the USSR and Lithuania.

Today the Lithuanian people, who have put an end to oppression and lack of rights and have established a new state and social system, must give legislative form to the firm union and friendship between the Lithuanian Republic and the USSR.

The Popular Sejm is convinced that only the accession of the Lithuanian state to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will guarantee its true sovereignty and ensure the genuine progress of industry and agriculture, the true flourishing of national culture and the true development of the material and spiritual forces of the people.

Guided by the will of the people who have overthrown the old regime—the regime of oppression and lack of rights, the regime of human exploitation—the Popular Sejm *resolves*:

That the Supreme Soviet of the USSR be requested to admit the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Soviet Union as a Union Republic on the same grounds that govern the entry into the USSR of the Ukrainian, Byelorussian and the other Union Republics.

21 July 1940

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR*, 23 July 1940, No. 168

DECLARATION  
OF THE LATVIAN SEJM  
ON STATE POWER IN LATVIA  
(*Excerpt*)

The elections to the Sejm held on 14 and 15 July have marked the triumph of the alliance between the working class, peasantry and

labouring intelligentsia. The platform of the League of Latvia's Working People has brought together the overwhelming majority of the Latvian people, all true patriots of our homeland. The electoral victory of the League of Latvia's Working People signified an historical change in the life of Latvia—its people have expressed the desire to put an end once and for all to the political rule of exploiters, to take the country's destiny in their own hands and to establish genuinely popular rule.

The new Sejm, the only fully empowered mouthpiece of the Latvian people's will, has legislatively secured the victory of the working people and considers its basic duty to be the settling of the question regarding the character of state power in Latvia. In settling this question, we turn to the historical experience and great example set by the Soviet peoples who are on friendly terms with us. The great historical experience of the peoples of the Soviet Union teaches us that only Soviet power expresses and protects the interests of the working people and is a truly popular power under which the people themselves govern the country without landlords and capitalists. As the experience of capitalist countries shows, including our bitter experience in bourgeois Latvia, any other power is nothing but the domination and unlimited arbitrary rule of a handful of exploiters over the vast majority of the people, either open or covered by the slogan of freedom used to deceive the people.

The USSR has once and for all abolished exploitation of man by man. Every working person in the USSR is guaranteed the right to work, to rest and leisure, to education, to material maintenance in old age.

Only Soviet power is the most democratic state power that guarantees the working people real participation in state administration, in the creation of their free and happy life. Only Soviet power creates conditions for the flourishing of people's talents, conditions for the promotion from among the people of leaders and organisers of various branches of political, economic and social life. The USSR has abolished national oppression and national inequality for ever. All the peoples of the USSR have joined to form a single friendly family. The national cultures of all the peoples of the USSR flourish on an unprecedented scale.

The Soviet Union's example shows that only Soviet power can give the Latvian working people of town and country peace, bread and freedom, deliver them from exploitation, destitution and lack of rights. Only Soviet power will guarantee us political, economic and cultural prosperity. Only Soviet power can and will fully secure the free national development of Latvia, the rapid progress and efflores-

cence of its national culture, science and art, and the free and powerful development of all the creative forces of the Latvian people.

Expressing the will of the free working people of Latvia, the Sejm solemnly proclaims Soviet power throughout the territory of Latvia. Latvia is declared a Soviet Socialist Republic. Henceforth all power in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic shall be vested in the working people of town and country as represented by Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Sejm firmly believes that all the Latvian population will rally round the Soviet government in order to achieve a full victory for the people's cause, secure the welfare of Latvia, the progress of its economy and culture, and the freedom and happiness of our people.

21 July 1940

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudya-shchikhsvya SSSR*, 23 July 1940, No. 168

#### DECLARATION OF THE LATVIAN SEJM

#### ON THE ACCESSION OF LATVIA TO THE USSR

*(Excerpt)*

Today, when the Latvian people have overthrown the old regime, the regime of oppression and lack of rights, and have embarked on the broad and bright path of a new life, of new state and social building, the great historic moment has come when all the barriers dividing Latvia and the USSR must be removed once and for all, and the firm union and friendship between the Latvian Republic and the USSR must be given legislative form. The Popular Sejm that has assembled today is convinced that only the entry of Latvia into the USSR will guarantee the true sovereignty of our state, will secure genuine progress in our industry, agriculture, and culture, a brilliant and mighty rise in the material and cultural standards of the Latvian people, and the rapid development and efflorescence of our beloved homeland.

Our people are closely associated with the fraternal peoples of the USSR by the firm bonds of the long revolutionary struggle against tsarism, against the capitalists and landlords who oppressed both the Russian and Latvian workers and peasants.

The time has come to consolidate these bonds for ever. By entering the great fraternal family of happy peoples in the land of socialism the Latvian people will unfold all their rich creative forces and hand in hand with the working people of the Soviet Union will advance

along the path of building the new life. Only within the framework of the USSR will the Latvian people be able to heal the wounds inflicted on them by long years of subjugation. Only with the help of the Soviet Union, their great friend, and as an equal member of the fraternal family of Soviet Republics will the Latvian people be able to advance their economy, develop their national culture, secure their national equality, and bring peace, bread and genuine freedom to the working people of Latvia.

Proceeding from the unanimously expressed will of the Latvian people, the Sejm resolves:

That the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics be requested to admit the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Soviet Union as a Union Republic on the same grounds that govern the entry into the Soviet Union of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the other Union Soviet Socialist Republics.

21 July 1940

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR, 29 July 1940, No. 168*

**DECLARATION  
OF THE STATE DUMA OF ESTONIA  
ON STATE POWER IN ESTONIA**

*(Excerpt)*

The State Duma elections, held on 14 and 15 July, are a great occasion that has heralded the victory of the working class, peasantry and labouring intelligentsia. The platform of the League of the Estonian Working People has rallied around it the overwhelming majority of the Estonian people, all honest patriots of our homeland.

The election victory of the League of the Estonian Working People signifies a historic change in the life of Estonia, for the Estonian people have expressed their desire to put an end finally to the political rule of capitalists and big landowners, to assume leadership of the country and establish a genuine popular government.

The new State Duma, which is the only fully empowered mouthpiece of the Estonian people's will, is to implement the people's demands and give legislative form to the victory the Estonian working people won in the struggle against the exploiter system, and regards as its basic duty the settlement of the question concerning the nature of state power in Estonia.

In settling the question of state power, we turn to the great example set by the friendly peoples of the Soviet Union and their historical experience.

The great historical experience of the Soviet Union teaches us that the Soviet system is the only real spokesman and protector of the working people's interests, the only real government of the people and by the people, a government without landlords and capitalists.

Any other government, as is shown by the experience of capitalist countries, including our experience in bourgeois Estonia, means overt or covert deceit under cover of slogans about freedom and equality, unbridled arbitrary government by a handful of exploiters over the vast majority of the people.

The Soviet Union has ended for ever hired slavery, the exploitation of man by man. Every worker is guaranteed the right to work, to rest and leisure, to social maintenance in old age, and to education. Concern for man is the guiding principle of Soviet life. Soviet power alone is the most democratic state power. Through the Soviets the working people run the state and create a free and happy life for themselves.

The worker-and-peasant alliance, embodied in the Soviets, transforms the Soviet state into an invincible power. Soviet power alone creates conditions for the flourishing of people's talents, for the promotion from among the people of leaders and organisers of political, economic and public life.

The Soviet Union has abolished national oppression and national inequality for ever. All the Soviet peoples constitute one friendly family.

Only in the Soviet Union have the national cultures of all peoples blossomed up with unprecedented force. There are no more backward peoples in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union's example shows that only Soviet power can assure the working people of town and countryside peace, bread and freedom and save the Estonian people from exploitation, poverty and lawlessness. Soviet power alone can ensure our political, economic and cultural flowering. The Soviet system alone will guarantee the Estonian people's true and free national development.

Expressing the free and unanimous will of the Estonian working people, the State Duma proclaims Soviet power throughout the territory of Estonia.

Estonia is proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic.

Henceforth all power in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is vested in the urban and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The State Duma is convinced that the entire Estonian people will

rally round Soviet power in order to achieve a full victory for the labouring people, for the good of Estonia and for the efflorescence of the economy and culture, the freedom and happiness of our people.

21 July 1940

*Khronologicheskoye sobraniye zakonodatelnykh aktov Estonskoy SSR* (Chronological Collection of the Legislative Acts of the Estonian SSR), 1940-1944, Tallinn, 1970, p. 3

DECLARATION  
OF THE STATE DUMA OF ESTONIA

ON THE ACCESSION OF ESTONIA  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

(*Excerpt*)

Now that the Estonian people have smashed the old regime, the regime of oppression and arbitrary rule, taken the destiny of their homeland into their own hands and embarked on the broad and bright path of building a new life, a great historic hour has come: the will of the Estonian people which has been expressed in a nation-wide vote to establish a firm alliance and indissoluble friendship between the Estonian Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall be given legislative form.

The State Duma is convinced that only the inclusion of Estonia in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics can guarantee the genuine sovereignty of our state, the free national development of our people, the efflorescence of our industry, agriculture and our national culture, the rapid progress of the material and cultural well-being of the Estonian people, and the prosperity of our beloved homeland. The labouring people of Estonia has long been linked with the peoples of the USSR by the fraternal bonds of joint revolutionary struggle against tsarism and the capitalists and landlords who oppressed both the Russian and Estonian workers and peasants.

On entering the great fraternal family of the free nations of the country of socialism, the Estonian people will display their rich and creative forces and hand in hand with the working people of the USSR will advance along the path of building a new life.

Only as an equal member of the great Soviet Union, the fraternal family of the Soviet republics, will the Estonian people be able to raise their economy to a new level, develop their national culture,

secure national equality, and bring peace, bread and genuine freedom to the working people of Estonia.

Relying on the unanimous will of the Estonian people, the State Duma resolves:

That the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics be requested to admit the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Soviet Union as a Union Republic, on the same basis as the Ukrainian SSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the other Union Republics that form part of the USSR.

22 July 1940

*Izvestia Sovietov deputatov trudyashchikhsya SSSR*, 23 July 1940, No. 168

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
ON THE FORMATION OF THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC AS A UNION REPUBLIC

*(Excerpt)*

In response to the wishes of the working people of Bessarabia and of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on the reunification of the Moldavian population of Bessarabia with the Moldavian population of the Moldavian ASSR and guided by the Soviet principle of the free development of nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics r e s o l v e s :

1. That the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic be formed with the status of a Union Republic.

2. That the following be incorporated in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic: the city of Tiraspol and the Grigoriopol, Dubossary, Kamenka, Rybnitsa, Slobodzeya and Tiraspol districts of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the city of Kishinev and the Beltsy, Bendery, Kishinev, Kagul, Orgeyev and Soroki uyezds of Bessarabia.

3. That the industrial enterprises situated on the territory of Bessarabia and the Moldavian ASSR be placed under the control of the Union Moldavain Soviet Socialist Republic in accordance with Para 2 of the present Law, with the exception of a small number of enterprises of all-Union importance.

4. That the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR and the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR be requested to submit for the consideration of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

a draft instrument establishing a strict border between the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic.

2 August 1940

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1940, No. 28

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
  
**ON THE ADMISSION  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*(Excerpt)*

Having heard the statement made by the Authoritative Commission of the Lithuanian Sejm, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics **r e s o l v e s**:

1. That the request of the Sejm of Lithuania be granted and that the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic be admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an equal Union Soviet Socialist Republic.

3 August 1940

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1940, No. 28

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
  
**ON THE ADMISSION  
OF THE LATVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

*(Excerpt)*

Having heard the statement made by the Authoritative Commission of the Latvian Sejm, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics **r e s o l v e s**:

1. That the request of the Sejm of Latvia be granted and the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic be admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an equal Union Soviet Socialist Republic.

5 August 1940

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1940, No. 28

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
ON THE ADMISSION  
OF THE ESTONIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*(Excerpt)*

Having heard the statement of the Authoritative Commission of the State Duma of Estonia, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics r e s o l v e s:

1. That the request of the State Duma of Estonia be granted and the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic be admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as an equal Union Soviet Socialist Republic.

6 August 1940

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1940, No. 28

DECREE  
OF THE PRESIDIUUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE USSR  
ON THE ADMISSION  
OF THE TUVA PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*(Excerpt)*

Having considered the request of the Small Khural of the Working People of the Tuva People's Republic that the Tuva People's Republic be admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR r e s o l v e s:

1. That the request of the Small Khural of the Working People of the Tuva People's Republic be granted and the Tuva People's Republic be admitted to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

2. That the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic be requested to admit the Tuva People's Republic to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic with a status of an Autonomous Region.

4. That the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR be instructed to take relevant organisational and economic measures caused by the incorporation of the Tuva People's Republic in the USSR, and to approve measures aimed at securing economic and cultural construction in the Tuva Autonomous Region and allocate the necessary funds for these purposes.

11 October 1944

*Sbornik zakonov SSSR i ukazov Presidiuma Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR* (Collected Laws of the USSR and Decrees of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet), Vol. 1, 1975, p. 79

DECREE  
OF THE PRESIDIUUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE FORMATION OF THE SOUTH SAKHALIN REGION<sup>1</sup>  
WITHIN THE Khabarovsk Territory of the RSFSR**

It is decreed that the South Sakhalin Region be formed within the Khabarovsk Territory of the RSFSR on the territory of South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands with its administrative centre in the town of Toyohara<sup>2</sup> and that this region be incorporated in the Khabarovsk Territory of the RSFSR.

2 February 1946

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1946, No. 5

DECREE  
OF THE PRESIDIUUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE FORMATION OF THE KÖNIGSBERG REGION  
WITHIN THE RSFSR<sup>3</sup>**

It is decreed that the Königsberg Region be formed on the territory of the city of Königsberg and its adjacent areas with its administrative centre in the city of Königsberg.<sup>4</sup>

It is also decreed that the Königsberg Region be incorporated into the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

7 April 1946

*Sbornik zakonov SSSR. . .*, Vol. 1, 1975,  
p. 94

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<sup>1</sup> By its decree of 2 January 1947 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR abolished the South Sakhalin Region, its territory being incorporated in the Sakhalin Region, and separated the Sakhalin Region from the Khabarovsk Territory (*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*, 1947, No. 2).

For the return to the Soviet Union of the southern part of Sakhalin and its adjacent islands and the transfer to the Soviet Union of the Kuril Islands, see the Crimea Agreement of the Three Great Powers, signed on 11 February 1945 (*Izvestia*, 12 February 1946).

<sup>2</sup> The town of Toyohara was renamed Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk by a Decree of 4 June 1946. According to the Decree of 18 April 1947 this town became the administrative centre of the Sakhalin Region (*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*, 1947, No. 14).

<sup>3</sup> By a Decree of 4 July 1946 the Königsberg Region was renamed the Kaliningrad Region (*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*, 1946, No. 25).

<sup>4</sup> For the transfer of the city of Königsberg and its adjacent area to the Soviet Union, see the materials of the Berlin Conference of Three Powers held between 17 July and 2 August 1945 (*Izvestia*, 3 August 1945).

LAW OF THE USSR

**ON THE REORGANISATION OF THE KARELO-FINNISH SSR  
INTO THE KARELIAN AUTONOMOUS SSR  
AND ITS INCLUSION IN THE RSFSR**

Taking into account the wishes of the working people of the Karelo-Finnish SSR, the national composition of the population, the common economy, and the close economic and cultural ties between the Karelo-Finnish Republic and the RSFSR, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR *resolves*:

*Article 1.* That the request of the Supreme Soviet of the Karelo-Finnish SSR on the reorganisation of the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic into the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic be granted.

*Article 2.* That the representations made by the Supreme Soviet of the Karelo-Finnish SSR and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR be approved and the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic be included in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

16 July 1956

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1956, No. 15

DECREE  
OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE TUVA AUTONOMOUS  
REGION INTO THE TUVA AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST  
REPUBLIC**

*(Excerpt)*

In response to the wishes of the working people of the Tuva Autonomous Region, in accordance with the principle of the free self-determination of nationalities, with the purpose of creating conditions for the further national and state development of the Tuvian people, and in accordance with Article 14 (f) of the Constitution of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR *resolves*:

1. That the transformation of the Tuva Autonomous Region into the Tuva Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, effected by the Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of 9 October 1961, be approved.

10 October 1961

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1961, No. 42, Item 431

Chapter X  
**CONSTITUTIONS OF THE UNION REPUBLICS**

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
ON THE RUSSIAN SOVIET FEDERATIVE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the RSFSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the RSFSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the RSFSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the RSFSR exercises state power independently and maintains its sovereign rights in full.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 17th All-Russia Congress of Soviets on 21 January 1937.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Ukrainian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the liberation of the Ukrainian people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, and the defeat of the nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the Ukrainian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance by the Union Republics along economic, political and defensive lines, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the other Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic exercises state power independently and maintains its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE GEORGIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>2</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Georgian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 14th Ukrainian Congress of Soviets on 30 January 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th All-Georgia Congress of Soviets on 13 February 1937.

grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power of the Georgian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Georgian SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Georgian SSR exercises state power independently and maintains its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UZBEK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and dehkans.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Uzbek SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, bais, emirs and khans, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the reunification of the dismembered Uzbek people into a state of workers and dehkans, the liberation of the Uzbek people from the national oppression of tsarism, the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, and the rout of the nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the Uzbek SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Uzbek SSR on 14 February 1937.

equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Uzbek SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Uzbek SSR exercises state power independently and retains its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the BSSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the emancipation of the Byelorussian people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the rout of the Byelorussian nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the BSSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Byelorussian SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Byelorussian SSR exercises state power independently and retains its sovereign rights in full.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 12th Congress of Soviets of the Byelorussian SSR on 19 February 1937.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TAJIK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords, feudal emirs and capitalists, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the emancipation of the Tajik people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, the rout of the nationalist counter-revolution and the unification of the dismembered Tajik people into a state of workers and peasants.

*Article 3.* All power in the Tajik SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Tajik SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Tajik SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TURKMEN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>2</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and daikhans.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Turkmen SSR consists of

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Tajik SSR on 1 March 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Turkmen SSR on 2 March 1937.

the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords, capitalists, khans and bais, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the liberation of the Turkmen people from the national oppression of tsarism, the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, the rout of the national counter-revolution and the unification of the dismembered Turkmen people into a state of workers and daikhans.

*Article 3.* All power in the Turkmen SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republic enjoying equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Turkmen SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Turkmen SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Azerbaijan SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the liberation of the Azerbaijan people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, and the rout of the nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the Azerbaijan SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic has

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets on 14 March 1937.

united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Azerbaijan SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Azerbaijan SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE KIRGHIZ SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Kirghiz SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and gained in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the liberation of the Kirghiz people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the rout of the bai and manap nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the Kirghiz SSR is vested in the working people of town and country (ail, kyshtak) as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Kirghiz SSR vests in the USSR as represented by the higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Kirghiz SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 5th Congress of Soviets of the Kirghiz SSR on 23 March 1937.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE ARMENIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Armenian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists, the liberation of the Armenian people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie, the rout of the Dashnak nationalist counter-revolution and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the Armenian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Armenian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Armenian SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE KAZAKH SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>2</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Kazakh SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged and grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords, capitalists and bais, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship, the

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Congress of Soviets of the Armenian SSR on 23 March 1937.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 10th All-Kazakhstan Congress of Soviets on 26 March 1937.

liberation of the Kazakh people from the national oppression of tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the rout of the nationalist counter-revolution.

*Article 3.* All power in the Kazakh SSR is vested in the working people of town and country (auls) as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance by the Soviet Republics along economic, political and defensive lines, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Kazakh SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Kazakh SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Lithuanian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the Lithuanian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary Session of the Popular Sejm of the Lithuanian SSR on 25 August 1940.

Acting on this, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Lithuanian SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE LATVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Latvian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have grown in strength as a result of the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and big landowners and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the Latvian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights ... into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Latvian SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Latvian SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE ESTONIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>2</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary Second Session of the Popular Sejm of the Latvian SSR on 25 August 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the State Duma of the Estonian SSR on 25 August 1940.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Estonian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged as a result of the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and big landowners and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the Estonian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Acting on this, the Estonian SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Estonian SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

*Article 1.* The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

*Article 2.* The political foundation of the Moldavian SSR consists of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which have emerged as a result of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship.

*Article 3.* All power in the Moldavian SSR is vested in the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

*Article 13.* In order to effect mutual assistance along economic, political and defensive lines, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic has united on a voluntary basis with the Soviet Socialist Republics enjoying equal rights . . . into a federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR on 12 February 1941.

Acting on this, the Moldavian SSR vests in the USSR as represented by its higher bodies of state power and state administration the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR the Moldavian SSR exercises state power independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

**IV**  
**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR OF 1977**  
**AND THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE**  
**UNION REPUBLICS**

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DECREE  
OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR**

Having heard the report of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, on the draft Constitution of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR *resolves*:

1. To approve in the main the draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presented by the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and to submit it for nation-wide discussion.
2. To publish the draft Constitution of the USSR on 4 June 1977 in all central, republican, territorial and regional newspapers.
3. To convoke in October 1977 for consideration of the draft Constitution an Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

27 May 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1977, No. 22, Item 351

RESOLUTION  
OF THE PRESIDIUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE USSR

**ON THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION**  
**(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)**  
**OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

Having heard the communication of the Chairman of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade L. I. Brezh-

nev, on the draft Constitution of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR notes the great work done by the Constitutional Commission on the drafting of the Constitution of the USSR and the analysis and generalisation of proposals and comments on the draft submitted in the course of its nation-wide discussion,

the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR *resolves*:

1. To take note of the communication of the Chairman of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, to the effect that the Constitutional Commission has considered proposals and comments on the draft Constitution of the USSR received in the course of its nation-wide discussion, has made the necessary amendments and additions to the draft and is presenting the draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the consideration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

2. To submit for the consideration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR:

—the draft Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the adoption and announcement of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

—the draft Law of the USSR on the declaration of the day of adoption of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR a public holiday;

—the draft Law of the USSR on the procedure for the coming into force of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR.

30 September 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*,  
1977, No. 40, Item 599

DECLARATION  
OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE UNION  
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
ON THE ADOPTION AND ANNOUNCEMENT  
OF THE CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, acting on behalf of the Soviet people and expressing its sovereign will, adopts the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and announces its coming into force on the 7th of October 1977.

7 October 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*,  
1977, No. 41, Item 616

LAW  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS  
**ON THE DECLARATION  
OF THE DAY OF ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE USSR A PUBLIC HOLIDAY**

The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
*resolves:*

In commemoration of the adoption of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to declare the day of adoption of the Constitution, the 7th of October, a public holiday—USSR Constitution Day.

To regard the 7th of October as a non-working day.

7 October 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1977, No. 41, Item 618

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS**

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, overthrew capitalist and landowner rule, broke the fetters of oppression, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, and created the Soviet state, a new type of state, the basic instrument for defending the gains of the revolution and for building socialism and communism. Humanity thereby began the epoch-making turn from capitalism to socialism.

After achieving victory in the Civil War and repulsing imperialist intervention, the Soviet government carried through far-reaching social and economic transformations, and put an end once and for all to exploitation of man by man, antagonisms between classes, and strife between nationalities. The unification of the Soviet Republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics multiplied the forces and opportunities of the peoples of the country in the building of socialism. Social ownership of the means of production and genuine democracy for the working masses were established. For the first time in the history of mankind a socialist society was created.

The strength of socialism was vividly demonstrated by the immortal feat of the Soviet people and their Armed Forces in achieving their

historic victory in the Great Patriotic War. This victory consolidated the influence and international standing of the Soviet Union and created new opportunities for growth of the forces of socialism, national liberation, democracy, and peace throughout the world.

Continuing their creative endeavours, the working people of the Soviet Union have ensured rapid, all-round development of the country and steady improvement of the socialist system. They have consolidated the alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry, and people's intelligentsia, and friendship of the nations and nationalities of the USSR. Socio-political and ideological unity of Soviet society, in which the working class is the leading force, has been achieved. The aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat having been fulfilled, the Soviet state has become a state of the whole people. The leading role of the Communist Party, the vanguard of all the people, has grown.

In the USSR, a developed socialist society has been built. At this stage, when socialism is developing on its own foundations, the creative forces of the new system and the advantages of the socialist way of life are becoming increasingly evident, and the working people are more and more widely enjoying the fruits of their great revolutionary gains.

It is a society in which powerful productive forces and progressive science and culture have been created, in which the well-being of the people is constantly rising, and more and more favourable conditions are being provided for the all-round development of the individual.

It is a society of mature socialist social relations, in which, on the basis of the drawing together of all classes and social strata and of the juridical and factual equality of all its nations and nationalities and their fraternal co-operation, a new historical community of people has been formed—the Soviet people.

It is a society of high organisational capacity, ideological commitment, and consciousness of the working people, who are patriots and internationalists.

It is a society in which the law of life is concern of all for the good of each and concern of each for the good of all.

It is a society of true democracy, the political system of which ensures effective management of all public affairs, ever more active participation of the working people in running the state, and the combining of citizens' real rights and freedoms with their obligations and responsibility to society.

Developed socialist society is a natural, logical stage on the road to communism.

The supreme goal of the Soviet state is the building of a classless communist society in which there will be public, communist self-government. The main aims of the people's socialist state are: to lay the ma-

terial and technical foundation of communism, to perfect socialist social relations and transform them into communist relations, to mould the citizen of communist society, to raise the people's living and cultural standards, to safeguard the country's security, and to further the consolidation of peace and development of international cooperation.

The Soviet people,  
guided by the ideas of scientific communism and true to their revolutionary traditions,

relying on the great social, economic, and political gains of socialism, striving for the further development of socialist democracy,

taking into account the international position of the USSR as part of the world system of socialism, and conscious of their internationalist responsibility,

preserving continuity of the ideas and principles of the first Soviet Constitution of 1918, the 1924 Constitution of the USSR and the 1936 Constitution of the USSR,

hereby affirm the principles of the social structure and policy of the USSR, and define the rights, freedoms and obligations of citizens, and the principles of the organisation of the socialist state of the whole people, and its aims, and proclaim these in this Constitution.

## I.

### PRINCIPLES OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND POLICY OF THE USSR

#### Chapter 1

#### The Political System

*Article 1.* The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, the working people of all the nations and nationalities of the country.

*Article 2.* All power in the USSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the USSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 3.* The Soviet state is organised and functions on the principle of democratic centralism, namely the electiveness of all bodies of state authority from the lowest to the highest, their accountability to the

people, and the obligation of lower bodies to observe the decisions of higher ones. Democratic centralism combines central leadership with local initiative and creative activity and with the responsibility of each state body and official for the work entrusted to them.

*Article 4.* The Soviet state and all its bodies function on the basis of socialist law, ensure the maintenance of law and order, and safeguard the interests of society and the rights and freedoms of citizens.

State organisations, public organisations and officials shall observe the Constitution of the USSR and Soviet laws.

*Article 5.* Major matters of state shall be submitted to nationwide discussion and put to a popular vote (referendum).

*Article 6.* The leading and guiding force of Soviet society and the nucleus of its political system, of all state organisations and public organisations, is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The CPSU exists for the people and serves the people.

The Communist Party, armed with Marxism-Leninism, determines the general perspectives of the development of society and the course of the home and foreign policy of the USSR, directs the great constructive work of the Soviet people, and imparts a planned, systematic and theoretically substantiated character to their struggle for the victory of communism.

All party organisations shall function within the framework of the Constitution of the USSR.

*Article 7.* Trade unions, the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, cooperatives, and other public organisations, participate, in accordance with the aims laid down in their rules, in managing state and public affairs, and in deciding political, economic, and social and cultural matters.

*Article 8.* Work collectives take part in discussing and deciding state and public affairs, in planning production and social development, in training and placing personnel, and in discussing and deciding matters pertaining to the management of enterprises and institutions, the improvement of working and living conditions, and the use of funds allocated both for developing production and for social and cultural purposes and financial incentives.

Work collectives promote socialist emulation, the spread of progressive methods of work, and the strengthening of production discipline, educate their members in the spirit of communist morality, and strive to enhance their political consciousness and raise their cultural level and skills and qualifications.

*Article 9.* The principal direction in the development of the political system of Soviet society is the extension of socialist democracy, namely ever broader participation of citizens in managing the affairs

of society and the state, continuous improvement of the machinery of state, heightening of the activity of public organisations, strengthening of the system of people's control, consolidation of the legal foundations of the functioning of the state and of public life, greater openness and publicity, and constant responsiveness to public opinion.

## Chapter 2

### The Economic System

*Article 10.* The foundation of the economic system of the USSR is socialist ownership of the means of production in the form of state property (belonging to all the people), and collective farm-and-cooperative property.

Socialist ownership also embraces the property of trade unions and other public organisations which they require to carry out their purposes under their rules.

The state protects socialist property and provides conditions for its growth.

No one has the right to use socialist property for personal gain or other selfish ends.

*Article 11.* State property, i.e. the common property of the Soviet people, is the principal form of socialist property.

The land, its minerals, waters, and forests are the exclusive property of the state. The state owns the basic means of production in industry, construction, and agriculture; means of transport and communication; the banks; the property of state-run trade organisations and public utilities, and other state-run undertakings; most urban housing; and other property necessary for state purposes.

*Article 12.* The property of collective farms and other cooperative organisations, and of their joint undertakings, comprises the means of production and other assets which they require for the purposes laid down in their rules.

The land held by collective farms is secured to them for their free use in perpetuity.

The state promotes development of collective farm-and-cooperative property and its approximation to state property.

Collective farms, like other land users, are obliged to make effective and thrifty use of the land and to increase its fertility.

*Article 13.* Earned income forms the basis of the personal property of Soviet citizens. The personal property of citizens of the USSR may include articles of everyday use, personal consumption and convenience, the implements and other objects of a small-holding, a house, and

earned savings. The personal property of citizens and the right to inherit it are protected by the state.

Citizens may be granted the use of plots of land, in the manner prescribed by law, for a subsidiary small-holding (including the keeping of livestock and poultry), for fruit and vegetable growing or for building an individual dwelling. Citizens are required to make rational use of the land allotted to them. The state, and collective farms provide assistance to citizens in working their small-holdings.

Property owned or used by citizens shall not serve as a means of deriving unearned income or be employed to the detriment of the interests of society.

*Article 14.* The source of the growth of social wealth and of the well-being of the people, and of each individual, is the labour, free from exploitation, of Soviet people.

The state exercises control over the measure of labour and of consumption in accordance with the principle of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." It fixes the rate of taxation on taxable income.

Socially useful work and its results determine a person's status in society. By combining material and moral incentives and encouraging innovation and a creative attitude to work, the state helps transform labour into the prime vital need of every Soviet citizen.

*Article 15.* The supreme goal of social production under socialism is the fullest possible satisfaction of the people's growing material, and cultural and intellectual requirements.

Relying on the creative initiative of the working people, socialist emulation, and scientific and technological progress, and by improving the forms and methods of economic management, the state ensures growth of the productivity of labour, raising of the efficiency of production and of the quality of work, and dynamic, planned, proportionate development of the economy.

*Article 16.* The economy of the USSR is an integral economic complex comprising all the elements of social production, distribution, and exchange on its territory.

The economy is managed on the basis of state plans for economic and social development, with due account of the sectoral and territorial principles, and by combining centralised direction with the managerial independence and initiative of individual and amalgamated enterprises and other organisations, for which active use is made of management accounting, profit, cost, and other economic levers and incentives.

*Article 17.* In the USSR, the law permits individual labour in handicrafts, farming, the provision of services for the public, and other

forms of activity based exclusively on the personal work of individual citizens and members of their families. The state makes regulations for such work to ensure that it serves the interests of society.

*Article 18.* In the interests of the present and future generations, the necessary steps are taken in the USSR to protect and make scientific, rational use of the land and its mineral and water resources, and the plant and animal kingdoms, to preserve the purity of air and water, ensure reproduction of natural wealth, and improve the human environment.

### Chapter 3

## Social Development and Culture

*Article 19.* The social basis of the USSR is the unbreakable alliance of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia.

The state helps enhance the social homogeneity of society, namely the elimination of class differences and of the essential distinctions between town and country and between mental and physical labour, and the all-round development and drawing together of all the nations and nationalities of the USSR.

*Article 20.* In accordance with the communist ideal—"The free development of each is the condition of the free development of all"—the state pursues the aim of giving citizens more and more real opportunities to apply their creative energies, abilities, and talents, and to develop their personalities in every way.

*Article 21.* The state concerns itself with improving working conditions, safety and labour protection and the scientific organisation of work, and with reducing and ultimately eliminating all arduous physical labour through comprehensive mechanisation and automation of production processes in all branches of the economy.

*Article 22.* A programme is being consistently implemented in the USSR to convert agricultural work into a variety of industrial work, to extend the network of educational, cultural and medical institutions, and of trade, public catering, service and public utility facilities in rural localities, and transform hamlets and villages into well-planned and well-appointed settlements.

*Article 23.* The state pursues a steady policy of raising people's pay levels and real incomes through increase in productivity.

In order to satisfy the needs of Soviet people more fully social consumption funds are created. The state, with the broad participation of public organisations and work collectives, ensures the growth and just distribution of these funds.

*Article 24.* In the USSR, state systems of health protection, social security, trade and public catering, communal services and amenities, and public utilities, operate and are being extended.

The state encourages cooperatives and other public organisations to provide all types of services for the population. It encourages the development of mass physical culture and sport.

*Article 25.* In the USSR, there is a uniform system of public education, which is being constantly improved, that provides general education and vocational training for citizens, serves the communist education and intellectual and physical development of the youth, and trains them for work and social activity.

*Article 26.* In accordance with society's needs the state provides for planned development of science and the training of scientific personnel and organises introduction of the results of research in the economy and other spheres of life.

*Article 27.* The state concerns itself with protecting, augmenting and making extensive use of society's cultural wealth for the moral and aesthetic education of the Soviet people, for raising their cultural level.

In the USSR, development of the professional, amateur and folk arts is encouraged in every way.

## Chapter 4

### Foreign Policy

*Article 28.* The USSR steadfastly pursues a Leninist policy of peace and stands for strengthening of the security of nations and broad international cooperation.

The foreign policy of the USSR is aimed at ensuring international conditions favourable for building communism in the USSR, safeguarding the state interests of the Soviet Union, consolidating the positions of world socialism, supporting the struggle of peoples for national liberation and social progress, preventing wars of aggression, achieving universal and complete disarmament, and consistently implementing the principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.

In the USSR war propaganda is banned.

*Article 29.* The USSR's relations with other states are based on observance of the following principles: sovereign equality; mutual renunciation of the use or threat of force; inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity of states; peaceful settlement of disputes; non-intervention in internal affairs; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the equal rights of peoples and their right to decide their own destiny;

cooperation among states; and fulfilment in good faith of obligations arising from the generally recognised principles and rules of international law, and from the international treaties signed by the USSR.

*Article 30.* The USSR, as part of the world system of socialism and of the socialist community, promotes and strengthens friendship, cooperation, and comradely mutual assistance with other socialist countries on the basis of the principle of socialist internationalism, and takes an active part in socialist economic integration and the socialist international division of labour.

## Chapter 5

### Defence of the Socialist Motherland

*Article 31.* Defence of the Socialist Motherland is one of the most important functions of the state, and is the concern of the whole people.

In order to defend the gains of socialism, the peaceful labour of the Soviet people, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, the USSR maintains armed forces and has instituted universal military service.

The duty of the Armed Forces of the USSR to the people is to provide reliable defence of the Socialist Motherland and to be in constant combat readiness, guaranteeing that any aggressor is instantly repulsed.

*Article 32.* The state ensures the security and defence capability of the country, and supplies the Armed Forces of the USSR with everything necessary for that purpose.

The duties of state bodies, public organisations, officials, and citizens in regard to safeguarding the country's security and strengthening its defence capacity are defined by the legislation of the USSR.

## II.

### THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL

## Chapter 6

### Citizenship of the USSR. Equality of Citizens' Rights

*Article 33.* Uniform federal citizenship is established for the USSR. Every citizen of a Union Republic is a citizen of the USSR.

The grounds and procedure for acquiring or forfeiting Soviet citizenship are defined by the Law on Citizenship of the USSR.

When abroad, citizens of the USSR enjoy the protection and assistance of the Soviet state.

*Article 34.* Citizens of the USSR are equal before the law without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile, or other status.

The equal rights of citizens of the USSR are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social, and cultural life.

*Article 35.* Women and men have equal rights in the USSR.

Exercise of these rights is ensured by according women equal access with men to education and vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration, and promotion, and in social and political, and cultural activity, and by special labour and health protection measures for women; by providing conditions enabling mothers to work; by legal protection, and material and moral support for mothers and children, including paid leaves and other benefits for expectant mothers and mothers, and gradual reduction of working time for mothers with small children.

*Article 36.* Citizens of the USSR of different races and nationalities have equal rights.

Exercise of these rights is ensured by a policy of all-round development and drawing together of all the nations and nationalities of the USSR, by educating citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and by the possibility to use their native language and the languages of other peoples of the USSR.

Any direct or indirect limitation of the rights of citizens or establishment of direct or indirect privileges on grounds of race or nationality, and any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness, hostility or contempt, are punishable by law.

*Article 37.* Citizens of other countries and stateless persons in the USSR are guaranteed the rights and freedoms provided by law, including the right to apply to a court and other state bodies for the protection of their personal, property, family, and other rights.

Citizens of other countries and stateless persons, when in the USSR, are obliged to respect the Constitution of the USSR and observe Soviet laws.

*Article 38.* The USSR grants the right of asylum to foreigners persecuted for defending the interests of the working people and the cause of peace, or for participation in the revolutionary and national-liberation movement, or for progressive social and political, scientific or other creative activity.

## Chapter 7

### The Basic Rights, Freedoms, and Duties of Citizens of the USSR

*Article 39.* Citizens of the USSR enjoy in full the social, economic, political and personal rights and freedoms proclaimed and guaranteed by the Constitution of the USSR and by Soviet laws. The socialist system ensures enlargement of the rights and freedoms of citizens and continuous improvement of their living standards as social, economic, and cultural development programmes are fulfilled.

Enjoyment by citizens of their rights and freedoms must not be to the detriment of the interests of society or the state, or infringe the rights of other citizens.

*Article 40.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to work (that is, to guaranteed employment and pay in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work, and not below the state-established minimum), including the right to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society.

This right is ensured by the socialist economic system, steady growth of the productive forces, free vocational and professional training, improvement of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement.

*Article 41.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to rest and leisure.

This right is ensured by the establishment of a working week not exceeding 41 hours, for workers and other employees, a shorter working day in a number of trades and industries, and shorter hours for night work; by the provision of paid annual holidays, weekly days of rest, extension of the network of cultural, educational and health-building institutions, and the development on a mass scale of sport, physical culture, and camping and tourism; by the provision of neighbourhood recreational facilities, and of other opportunities for rational use of free time.

The length of collective farmers' working and leisure time is established by their collective farms.

*Article 42.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to health protection.

This right is ensured by free, qualified medical care provided by state health institutions; by extension of the network of therapeutic and health-building institutions; by the development and improvement of safety and hygiene in industry; by carrying out broad prophylactic measures; by measures to improve the environment; by special care for the health of the rising generation, including prohibition of child labour, excluding the work done by children as part of the school curriculum;

and by developing research to prevent and reduce the incidence of disease and ensure citizens a long and active life.

*Article 43.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to maintenance in old age, in sickness, and in the event of complete or partial disability or loss of the breadwinner.

This right is guaranteed by social insurance of workers and other employees and collective farmers; by allowances for temporary disability; by the provision by the state or by collective farms of retirement pensions, disability pensions, and pensions for loss of the breadwinner; by providing employment for the partially disabled; by care for the elderly and the disabled; and by other forms of social security.

*Article 44.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to housing.

This right is ensured by the development and upkeep of state and socially-owned housing; by assistance for cooperative and individual house building; by fair distribution, under public control, of the housing that becomes available through fulfilment of the programme of building well-appointed dwellings, and by low rents and low charges for utility services. Citizens of the USSR shall take good care of the housing allocated to them.

*Article 45.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by free provision of all forms of education, by the institution of universal, compulsory secondary education, and broad development of vocational, specialised secondary, and higher education in which instruction is oriented toward practical activity and production; by the development of extramural, correspondence and evening courses; by the provision of state scholarships and grants and privileges for students; by the free issue of school textbooks; by the opportunity to attend a school where teaching is in the native language; and by the provision of facilities for self-education.

*Article 46.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to enjoy cultural benefits.

This right is ensured by broad access to the cultural treasures of their own land and of the world that are preserved in state and other public collections; by the development and fair distribution of cultural and educational institutions throughout the country; by developing television and radio broadcasting and the publishing of books, newspapers and periodicals, and by extending the free library service; and by expanding cultural exchanges with other countries.

*Article 47.* Citizens of the USSR, in accordance with the aims of building communism, are guaranteed freedom of scientific, technical, and artistic work. This freedom is ensured by broadening scientific research, encouraging invention and innovation, and developing literature and the arts. The state provides the necessary material conditions

for this and support for voluntary societies and unions of workers in the arts, organises introduction of inventions and innovations in production and other spheres of activity.

The rights of authors, inventors and innovators are protected by the state.

*Article 48.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to take part in the management and administration of state and public affairs and in the discussion and adoption of laws and measures of All-Union and local significance.

This right is ensured by the opportunity to vote and to be elected to Soviets of People's Deputies and other elective state bodies, to take part in nationwide discussions and referendums, in people's control, in the work of state bodies, public organisations, and local community groups, and in meetings at places of work or residence.

*Article 49.* Every citizen of the USSR has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organisations for improving their activity, and to criticise shortcomings in their work.

Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action.

Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be called to account.

*Article 50.* In accordance with the interests of the people and in order to strengthen and develop the socialist system, citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations.

Exercise of these political freedoms is ensured by putting public buildings, streets and squares at the disposal of the working people and their organisations, by broad dissemination of information, and by the opportunity to use the press, television, and radio.

*Article 51.* In accordance with the aims of building communism, citizens of the USSR have the right to associate in public organisations that promote their political activity and initiative and satisfaction of their various interests.

Public organisations are guaranteed conditions for successfully performing the functions defined in their rules.

*Article 52.* Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion, and to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda. Incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds is prohibited.

In the USSR, the church is separated from the state, and the school from the church.

*Article 53.* The family enjoys the protection of the state.

Marriage is based on the free consent of the woman and the man; the spouses are completely equal in their family relations.

The state helps the family by providing and developing a broad system of childcare institutions, by organising and improving communal services and public catering, by paying grants on the birth of a child, by providing children's allowances and benefits for large families, and other forms of family allowances and assistance.

*Article 54.* Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No one may be arrested except by a court decision or on the warrant of a procurator.

*Article 55.* Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the home. No one may, without lawful grounds, enter a home against the will of those residing in it.

*Article 56.* The privacy of citizens, and of their correspondence, telephone conversations, and telegraphic communications is protected by law.

*Article 57.* Respect for the individual and protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens are the duty of all state bodies, public organisations, and officials.

Citizens of the USSR have the right to protection by the courts against encroachments on their honour and reputation, life and health, and personal freedom and property.

*Article 58.* Citizens of the USSR have the right to lodge a complaint against the actions of officials, state bodies and public bodies. Complaints shall be examined according to the procedure and within the time-limit established by law.

Actions by officials that contravene the law or exceed their powers, and infringe the rights of citizens, may be appealed against in a court in the manner prescribed by law.

Citizens of the USSR have the right to compensation for damage resulting from unlawful actions by state organisations and public organisations, or by officials in the performance of their duties.

*Article 59.* Citizens' exercise of their rights and freedoms is inseparable from the performance of their duties and obligations.

Citizens of the USSR are obliged to observe the Constitution of the USSR and Soviet laws, comply with the standards of socialist conduct, and uphold the honour and dignity of Soviet citizenship.

*Article 60.* It is the duty of, and a matter of honour for, every able-bodied citizen of the USSR to work conscientiously in his chosen, socially useful occupation, and strictly to observe labour discipline. Evasion of socially useful work is incompatible with the principles of socialist society.

*Article 61.* Citizens of the USSR are obliged to preserve and protect

socialist property. It is the duty of a citizen of the USSR to combat misappropriation and squandering of state and socially-owned property and to make thrifty use of the people's wealth.

Persons encroaching in any way on socialist property shall be punished according to the law.

*Article 62.* Citizens of the USSR are obliged to safeguard the interests of the Soviet state, and to enhance its power and prestige.

Defence of the Socialist Motherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the USSR.

Betrayal of the Motherland is the gravest of crimes against the people.

*Article 63.* Military service in the ranks of the Armed Forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of Soviet citizens.

*Article 64.* It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to respect the national dignity of other citizens, and to strengthen friendship of the nations and nationalities of the multinational Soviet state.

*Article 65.* A citizen of the USSR is obliged to respect the rights and lawful interests of other persons, to be uncompromising toward anti-social behaviour, and to help maintain public order.

*Article 66.* Citizens of the USSR are obliged to concern themselves with the upbringing of children, to train them for socially useful work, and to raise them as worthy members of socialist society. Children are obliged to care for their parents and help them.

*Article 67.* Citizens of the USSR are obliged to protect nature and conserve its riches.

*Article 68.* Concern for the preservation of historical monuments and other cultural values is a duty and obligation of citizens of the USSR.

*Article 69.* It is the internationalist duty of citizens of the USSR to promote friendship and cooperation with peoples of other lands and help maintain and strengthen world peace.

### III.

## THE NATIONAL-STATE STRUCTURE OF THE USSR

### Chapter 8

## The USSR—a Federal State

*Article 70.* The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

The USSR embodies the state unity of the Soviet people and draws

all its nations and nationalities together for the purpose of jointly building communism.

*Article 71.* The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics unites: the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic, The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic.

*Article 72.* Each Union Republic shall retain the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Article 73.* The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its highest bodies of state authority and administration, shall cover:

1. the admission of new republics to the USSR; endorsement of the formation of new autonomous republics and autonomous regions within Union Republics;
2. determination of the state boundaries of the USSR and approval of changes in the boundaries between Union Republics;
3. establishment of the general principles for the organisation and functioning of republican and local bodies of state authority and administration;
4. the ensurance of uniformity of legislative norms throughout the USSR and establishment of the fundamentals of the legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Union Republics;
5. pursuance of a uniform social and economic policy; direction of the country's economy; determination of the main lines of scientific and technological progress and the general measures for rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources; the drafting and approval of state plans for the economic and social development of the USSR, and endorsement of reports on their fulfilment;
6. the drafting and approval of the consolidated Budget of the USSR, and endorsement of the report on its execution; management of a single monetary and credit system; determination of the taxes and revenues

forming the Budget of the USSR, and the formulation of prices and wages policy;

7. direction of the sectors of the economy, and of enterprises and amalgamations under Union jurisdiction, and general direction of industries under Union-Republican jurisdiction;

8. issues of war and peace, defence of the sovereignty of the USSR and safeguarding of its frontiers and territory, and organisation of defence; direction of the Armed Forces of the USSR;

9. state security;

10. representation of the USSR in international relations; the USSR's relations with other states and with international organisations; establishment of the general procedure for, and coordination of, the relations of Union Republics with other states and with international organisations; foreign trade and other forms of external economic activity on the basis of state monopoly;

11. control over observance of the Constitution of the USSR, and ensurance of conformity of the Constitutions of Union Republics to the Constitution of the USSR;

12. and settlement of other matters of All-Union importance.

*Article 74.* The laws of the USSR shall have the same force in all Union Republics. In the event of a discrepancy between a Union Republic law and an All-Union law, the law of the USSR shall prevail.

*Article 75.* The territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a single entity and comprises the territories of the Union Republics.

The sovereignty of the USSR extends throughout its territory.

## Chapter 9

### The Union Soviet Socialist Republic

*Article 76.* A Union Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state that has united with other Soviet Republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Outside the spheres listed in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, a Union Republic exercises independent authority on its territory.

A Union Republic shall have its own Constitution conforming to the Constitution of the USSR with the specific features of the Republic being taken into account.

*Article 77.* Union Republics take part in decision-making in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Government of the USSR, and other bodies of the

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

A Union Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the USSR on its territory, and implement the decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR.

In matters that come within its jurisdiction, a Union Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organisations subordinate to the Union.

*Article 78.* The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent. The boundaries between Union Republics may be altered by mutual agreement of the Republics concerned, subject to ratification by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

*Article 79.* A Union Republic shall determine its division into territories, regions, areas, and districts, and decide other matters relating to its administrative and territorial structure.

*Article 80.* A Union Republic has the right to enter into relations with other states, conclude treaties with them, exchange diplomatic and consular representatives, and take part in the work of international organisations.

*Article 81.* The sovereign rights of Union Republics shall be safeguarded by the USSR.

## Chapter 10

### The Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic

*Article 82.* An Autonomous Republic is a constituent part of a Union Republic.

In spheres not within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Union Republic, an Autonomous Republic shall deal independently with matters within its jurisdiction.

An Autonomous Republic shall have its own Constitution conforming to the Constitutions of the USSR and the Union Republic with the specific features of the Autonomous Republic being taken into account.

*Article 83.* An Autonomous Republic takes part in decision-making through the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR and of the Union Republic respectively, in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the USSR and the Union Republic.

An Autonomous Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the USSR and the Union Republic on its territory, and implement de-

cisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the USSR and the Union Republic.

In matters within its jurisdiction, an Autonomous Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organisations subordinate to the Union or the Union Republic.

*Article 84.* The territory of an Autonomous Republic may not be altered without its consent.

*Article 85.* The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic includes the Bashkir, Buryat, Daghestan, Kabardin-Balkar, Kalmyk, Karelian, Komi, Mari, Mordovian, North Ossetian, Tatar, Tuva, Udmurt, Chechen-Ingush, Chuvash, and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Abkhasian and Adzhar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

## Chapter 11

### The Autonomous Region and Autonomous Area

*Article 86.* An Autonomous Region is a constituent part of a Union Republic or Territory. The Law on an Autonomous Region, upon submission by the Soviet of People's Deputies of the Autonomous Region concerned, shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

*Article 87.* The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic includes the Adygei, Gorno-Altai, Jewish, Karachai-Circassian, and Khakass Autonomous Regions.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the South Ossetian Autonomous Region.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

*Article 88.* An Autonomous Area is a constituent part of a Territory or Region. The Law on an Autonomous Area shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic concerned.

#### IV.

### SOVIETS OF PEOPLE'S DEPUTIES AND ELECTORAL PROCEDURE

#### Chapter 12

### The System of Soviets of People's Deputies and the Principles of Their Work

*Article 89.* The Soviets of People's Deputies, i.e. the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of Union Republics, the Supreme Soviets of Autonomous Republics, the Soviets of People's Deputies of Territories and Regions, the Soviets of People's Deputies of Autonomous Regions and Autonomous Areas, and the Soviets of People's Deputies of districts, cities, city districts, settlements and villages shall constitute a single system of bodies of state authority.

*Article 90.* The term of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of Union Republics, and the Supreme Soviets of Autonomous Republics shall be five years.

The term of local Soviets of People's Deputies shall be two and a half years.

Elections to Soviets of People's Deputies shall be called not later than two months before the expiry of the term of the Soviet concerned.

*Article 91.* The most important matters within the jurisdiction of the respective Soviets of People's Deputies shall be considered and settled at their sessions.

Soviets of People's Deputies shall elect standing commissions and form executive-administrative, and other bodies accountable to them.

*Article 92.* Soviets of People's Deputies shall form people's control bodies combining state control with control by the working people at enterprises, collective farms, institutions, and organisations.

People's control bodies shall check on the fulfilment of state plans and assignments, combat breaches of state discipline, localistic tendencies, narrow departmental attitudes, mismanagement, extravagance and waste, red tape and bureaucracy, and help improve the working of the state machinery.

*Article 93.* Soviets of People's Deputies shall direct all sectors of state, economic, and social and cultural development, either directly or through bodies instituted by them, take decisions and ensure their execution, and verify their implementation.

*Article 94.* Soviets of People's Deputies shall function publicly on the basis of collective, free, constructive discussion and decision-making, of systematic reporting back to them and the people by their executive-

administrative and other bodies, and of involving citizens on a broad scale in their work.

Soviets of People's Deputies and the bodies set up by them shall systematically inform the public about their work and the decisions taken by them.

## Chapter 13

### The Electoral System

*Article 95.* Deputies to all Soviets shall be elected on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

*Article 96.* Elections shall be universal: all citizens of the USSR who have reached the age of 18 shall have the right to vote and to be elected, with the exception of persons who have been legally certified insane.

To be eligible for election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR a citizen of the USSR must have reached the age of 21.

*Article 97.* Elections shall be equal: each citizen shall have one vote; all voters shall exercise the franchise on an equal footing.

*Article 98.* Elections shall be direct: deputies to all Soviets of People's Deputies shall be elected by citizens by direct vote.

*Article 99.* Voting at elections shall be secret: control over voters' exercise of the franchise is inadmissible.

*Article 100.* The following shall have the right to nominate candidates: branches and organisations of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, trade unions, and the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League; cooperatives and other public organisations; work collectives, and meetings of servicemen in their military units.

Citizens of the USSR and public organisations are guaranteed the right to free and all-round discussion of the political and personal qualities and competence of candidates, and the right to campaign for them at meetings, in the press, and on television and radio.

The expenses involved in holding elections to Soviets of People's Deputies shall be met by the state.

*Article 101.* Deputies to Soviets of People's Deputies shall be elected by constituencies.

A citizen of the USSR may not, as a rule, be elected to more than two Soviets of People's Deputies.

Elections to the Soviets shall be conducted by electoral commissions consisting of representatives of public organisations and work collectives, and of meetings of servicemen in military units.

The procedure for holding elections to Soviets of People's Deputies

shall be defined by the laws of the USSR, and of Union and Autonomous Republics.

*Article 102.* Electors give mandates to their Deputies.

The appropriate Soviets of People's Deputies shall examine electors' mandates, take them into account in drafting economic and social development plans and in drawing up the budget, organise implementation of the mandates, and inform citizens about it.

## Chapter 14

### People's Deputies

*Article 103.* Deputies are the plenipotentiary representatives of the people in the Soviets of People's Deputies.

In the Soviets, Deputies deal with matters relating to state, economic, and social and cultural development, organise implementation of the decisions of the Soviets, and exercise control over the work of state bodies, enterprises, institutions and organisations.

Deputies shall be guided in their activities by the interests of the state, and shall take the needs of their constituents into account and work to implement their electors' mandates.

*Article 104.* Deputies shall exercise their powers without discontinuing their regular employment or duties.

During sessions of the Soviet, and so as to exercise their deputy's powers in other cases stipulated by law, Deputies shall be released from their regular employment or duties, with retention of their average earnings at their permanent place of work.

*Article 105.* A Deputy has the right to address inquiries to the appropriate state bodies and officials, who are obliged to reply to them at a session of the Soviet.

Deputies have the right to approach any state or public body, enterprise, institution, or organisation on matters arising from their work as Deputies and to take part in considering the questions raised by them. The heads of the state or public bodies, enterprises, institutions or organisations concerned are obliged to receive Deputies without delay and to consider their proposals within the time-limit established by law.

*Article 106.* Deputies shall be ensured conditions for the unhampered and effective exercise of their rights and duties.

The immunity of Deputies, and other guarantees of their activity as Deputies, are defined in the Law on the Status of Deputies and other legislative acts of the USSR and of Union and Autonomous Republics.

*Article 107.* Deputies shall report on their work and on that of the

Soviet to their constituents, and to the work collectives and public organisations that nominated them.

Deputies who have not justified the confidence of their constituents may be recalled at any time by decision of a majority of the electors in accordance with the procedure established by law.

## V.

### HIGHER BODIES OF STATE AUTHORITY AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE USSR

#### Chapter 15

#### The Supreme Soviet of the USSR

*Article 108.* The highest body of state authority of the USSR shall be the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR is empowered to deal with all matters within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as defined by this Constitution.

The adoption and amendment of the Constitution of the USSR; admission of new Republics to the USSR; endorsement of the formation of new Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions; approval of the state plans for economic and social development, of the Budget of the USSR, and of reports on their execution; and the institution of bodies of the USSR accountable to it, are the exclusive prerogative of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Laws of the USSR shall be enacted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or by nationwide vote (referendum) held by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 109.* The Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall consist of two chambers: the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

The two chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall have equal rights.

*Article 110.* The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall have equal numbers of deputies.

The Soviet of the Union shall be elected by constituencies with equal populations.

The Soviet of Nationalities shall be elected on the basis of the following representation: 32 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 deputies from each Autonomous Republic, five deputies from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each Autonomous Area.

The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, upon sub-

mission by the credentials commissions elected by them, shall decide on the validity of Deputies' credentials, and, in cases in which the election law has been violated, shall declare the election of the Deputies concerned null and void.

*Article 111.* Each chamber of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall elect a Chairman and four Vice-Chairmen.

The Chairmen of the Soviet of the Union and of the Soviet of Nationalities shall preside over the sittings of the respective chambers and conduct their affairs.

Joint sittings of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be presided over alternately by the Chairman of the Soviet of the Union and the Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities.

*Article 112.* Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be convened twice a year.

Special sessions shall be convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its discretion or on the proposal of a Union Republic, or of not less than one-third of the Deputies of one of the chambers.

A session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall consist of separate and joint sittings of the chambers, and of meetings of the standing commissions of the chambers or commissions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR held between the sittings of the chambers. A session may be opened and closed at either separate or joint sittings of the chambers.

*Article 113.* The right to initiate legislation in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is vested in the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Union Republics through their highest bodies of state authority, commissions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and standing commissions of its chambers, Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Court of the USSR, and the Procurator-General of the USSR.

The right to initiate legislation is also vested in public organisations through their All-Union bodies.

*Article 114.* Bills and other matters submitted to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be debated by its chambers at separate or joint sittings. Where necessary, a bill or other matter may be referred to one or more commissions for preliminary or additional consideration.

A law of the USSR shall be deemed adopted when it has been passed in each chamber of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR by a majority of the total number of its Deputies. Decisions and other acts of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are adopted by a majority of the total number of Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Bills and other very important matters of state may be submitted for

nationwide discussion by a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or its Presidium taken on their own initiative or on the proposal of a Union Republic.

*Article 115.* In the event of disagreement between the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, the matter at issue shall be referred for settlement to a conciliation commission formed by the chambers on a parity basis, after which it shall be considered for a second time by the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities at a joint sitting. If agreement is again not reached, the matter shall be postponed for debate at the next session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or submitted by the Supreme Soviet to a nationwide vote (referendum).

*Article 116.* Laws of the USSR and decisions and other acts of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be published in the languages of the Union Republics over the signatures of the Chairman and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 117.* A deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR has the right to address inquiries to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and to Ministers and the heads of other bodies formed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The Council of Ministers of the USSR, or the official to whom the inquiry is addressed, is obliged to give a verbal or written reply within three days at the given session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 118.* A Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR may not be prosecuted, or arrested, or incur a court-imposed penalty, without the sanction of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or, between its sessions, of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 119.* The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, at a joint sitting of its chambers, shall elect a Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which shall be a standing body of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, accountable to it for all its work and exercising the functions of the highest body of state authority of the USSR between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, within the limits prescribed by the Constitution.

*Article 120.* The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be elected from among the Deputies and shall consist of a Chairman, First Vice-Chairman, 15 Vice-Chairmen (one from each Union Republic), a Secretary, and 21 members.

*Article 121.* The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall:

1. name the date of elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;
2. convene sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;
3. coordinate the work of the standing commissions of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;

4. ensure observance of the Constitution of the USSR and conformity of the Constitutions and laws of Union Republics to the Constitution and laws of the USSR;

5. interpret the laws of the USSR;

6. ratify and denounce international treaties of the USSR;

7. revoke decisions and ordinances of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and of the Councils of Ministers of Union Republics should they fail to conform to the law;

8. institute military and diplomatic ranks and other special titles; and confer the highest military and diplomatic ranks and other special titles;

9. institute orders and medals of the USSR, and honorific titles of the USSR; award orders and medals of the USSR; and confer honorific titles of the USSR;

10. grant citizenship of the USSR, and rule on matters of the renunciation or deprivation of citizenship of the USSR and of granting asylum;

11. issue All-Union acts of amnesty and exercise the right of pardon;

12. appoint and recall diplomatic representatives of the USSR to other countries and to international organisations;

13. receive the letters of credence and recall of the diplomatic representatives of foreign states accredited to it;

14. form the Council of Defence of the USSR and confirm its composition; appoint and dismiss the high command of the Armed Forces of the USSR;

15. proclaim martial law in particular localities or throughout the country in the interests of defence of the USSR;

16. order general or partial mobilisation;

17. between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, proclaim a state of war in the event of an armed attack on the USSR, or when it is necessary to meet international treaty obligations relating to mutual defence against aggression;

18. and exercise other powers vested in it by the Constitution and laws of the USSR.

*Article 122.* The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and subject to submission for its confirmation at the next session, shall:

1. amend existing legislative acts of the USSR when necessary;

2. approve changes in the boundaries between Union Republics;

3. form and abolish Ministries and State Committees of the USSR on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers of the USSR;

4. relieve individual members of the Council of Ministers of the USSR of their responsibilities and appoint persons to the Council of

Ministers on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

*Article 123.* The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR promulgates decrees and adopts decisions.

*Article 124.* On expiry of the term of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall retain its powers until the newly elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR has elected a new Presidium.

The newly elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall be convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR within two months of the elections.

*Article 125.* The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities shall elect standing commissions from among the Deputies to make a preliminary review of matters coming within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, to promote execution of the laws of the USSR and other acts of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its Presidium, and to check on the work of state bodies and organisations. The chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR may also set up joint commissions on a parity basis.

When it deems it necessary, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR sets up commissions of inquiry and audit, and commissions on any other matter.

All state and public bodies, organisations and officials are obliged to meet the requests of the commissions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and of its chambers, and submit the requisite materials and documents to them.

The commissions' recommendations shall be subject to consideration by state and public bodies, institutions and organisations. The commissions shall be informed, within the prescribed time-limit, of the results of such consideration or of the action taken.

*Article 126.* The Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall supervise the work of all state bodies accountable to it.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall form a Committee of People's Control of the USSR to head the system of people's control.

The organisation and procedure of people's control bodies are defined by the Law on People's Control in the USSR.

*Article 127.* The procedure of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and of its bodies shall be defined in the Rules and Regulations of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and other laws of the USSR enacted on the basis of the Constitution of the USSR.

## Chapter 16

### The Council of Ministers of the USSR

*Article 128.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR, i.e. the Government of the USSR, is the highest executive and administrative body of state authority of the USSR.

*Article 129.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR shall be formed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR at a joint sitting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, and shall consist of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, First Vice-Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, Ministers of the USSR, and Chairmen of State Committees of the USSR.

The Chairmen of the Councils of Ministers of Union Republics shall be *ex officio* members of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, may include in the Government of the USSR the heads of other bodies and organisations of the USSR.

The Council of Ministers of the USSR shall tender its resignation to a newly elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its first session.

*Article 130.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR shall be responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and, between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The Council of Ministers of the USSR shall report regularly on its work to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 131.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR is empowered to deal with all matters of state administration within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics insofar as, under the Constitution, they do not come within the competence of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR or the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Within its powers the Council of Ministers of the USSR shall:

1. ensure direction of economic, social, and cultural development; draft and implement measures to promote the well-being and cultural development of the people, to develop science and engineering, to ensure rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources, to consolidate the monetary and credit system, to pursue a uniform prices, wages, and social security policy, and to organise state insurance and a uniform system of accounting and statistics; and organise the management of industrial, constructional, and agricultural enterprises and amalgamations, transport and communications undertakings, banks, and other organisations and institutions of All-Union subordination;

2. draft current and long-term state plans for the economic and social development of the USSR and the Budget of the USSR, and submit them to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR; take measures to execute the state plans and Budget; and report to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the implementation of the plans and Budget;

3. implement measures to defend the interests of the state, protect socialist property and maintain public order, and guarantee and protect citizens' rights and freedoms;

4. take measures to ensure state security;

5. exercise general direction of the development of the Armed Forces of the USSR, and determine the annual contingent of citizens to be called up for active military service;

6. provide general direction in regard to relations with other states, foreign trade, and economic, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation of the USSR with other countries; take measures to ensure fulfilment of the USSR's international treaties; and ratify and denounce intergovernmental international agreements;

7. and when necessary, form committees, central boards and other departments under the Council of Ministers of the USSR to deal with matters of economic, social and cultural development, and defence.

*Article 132.* A Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, consisting of the Chairman, the First Vice-Chairmen, and Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, shall function as a standing body of the Council of Ministers of the USSR to deal with questions relating to guidance of the economy, and with other matters of state administration.

*Article 133.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR, on the basis of, and in pursuance of, the laws of the USSR and other decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its Presidium, shall issue decisions and ordinances and verify their execution. The decisions and ordinances of the Council of Ministers of the USSR shall be binding throughout the USSR.

*Article 134.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR has the right, in matters within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to suspend execution of decisions and ordinances of the Councils of Ministers of Union Republics, and to rescind acts of ministries and state committees of the USSR, and of other bodies subordinate to it.

*Article 135.* The Council of Ministers of the USSR shall coordinate and direct the work of All-Union and Union-Republican ministries, state committees of the USSR, and other bodies subordinate to it.

All-Union ministries and state committees of the USSR shall direct the work of the branches of administration entrusted to them, or exer-

cise inter-branch administration, throughout the territory of the USSR directly or through bodies set up by them.

Union-Republican ministries and state committees of the USSR direct the work of the branches of administration entrusted to them, or exercise inter-branch administration, as a rule, through the corresponding ministries and state committees, and other bodies of Union Republics, and directly administer individual enterprises and amalgamations of Union subordination. The procedure for transferring enterprises and amalgamations from Republic or local subordination to Union subordination shall be defined by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

Ministries and state committees of the USSR shall be responsible for the condition and development of the spheres of administration entrusted to them; within their competence, they issue orders and other acts on the basis of, and in execution of, the laws of the USSR and other decisions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its Presidium, and of decisions and ordinances of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and organise and verify their implementation.

*Article 136.* The competence of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and its Presidium, the procedure for their work, relationships between the Council of Ministers and other state bodies and the list of All-Union and Union-Republican ministries and state committees of the USSR are defined, on the basis of the Constitution, in the Law on the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

## VI.

### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE BODIES OF STATE AUTHORITY AND ADMINISTRATION IN UNION REPUBLICS

#### Chapter 17

#### **Higher Bodies of State Authority and Administration of a Union Republic**

*Article 137.* The highest body of state authority of a Union Republic shall be the Supreme Soviet of that Republic.

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic is empowered to deal with all matters within the jurisdiction of the Republic under the Constitutions of the USSR and the Republic.

Adoption and amendment of the Constitution of a Union Republic; endorsement of state plans for economic and social development, of the Republic's Budget, and of reports on their fulfilment; and the

formation of bodies accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic are the exclusive prerogative of that Supreme Soviet.

Laws of a Union Republic shall be enacted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic or by a popular vote (referendum) held by decision of the Republic's Supreme Soviet.

*Article 138.* The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic shall elect a Presidium, which is a standing body of that Supreme Soviet and accountable to it for all its work. The composition and powers of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic shall be defined in the Constitution of the Union Republic.

*Article 139.* The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic shall form a Council of Ministers of the Union Republic, i.e. the Government of that Republic, which shall be the highest executive and administrative body of state authority in the Republic.

The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic shall be responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of that Republic or, between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, to its Presidium.

*Article 140.* The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic issues decisions and ordinances on the basis of, and in pursuance of, the legislative acts of the USSR and of the Union Republic, and of decisions and ordinances of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and shall organise and verify their execution.

*Article 141.* The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic has the right to suspend the execution of decisions and ordinances of the Councils of Ministers of Autonomous Republics, to rescind the decisions and orders of the Executive Committees of Soviets of People's Deputies of Territories, Regions, and cities (i.e. cities under Republic jurisdiction) and of Autonomous Regions, and in Union Republics not divided into regions, of the Executive Committees of district and corresponding city Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 142.* The Council of Ministers of a Union Republic shall coordinate and direct the work of the Union-Republican and Republican ministries and of state committees of the Union Republic, and other bodies under its jurisdiction.

The Union-Republican ministries and state committees of a Union Republic shall direct the branches of administration entrusted to them, or exercise inter-branch control, and shall be subordinate to both the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic and the corresponding Union-Republican ministry or state committee of the USSR.

Republican ministries and state committees shall direct the branches of administration entrusted to them, or exercise inter-branch control, and shall be subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Union Republic.

## Chapter 18

### Higher Bodies of State Authority and Administration of an Autonomous Republic

*Article 143.* The highest body of state authority of an Autonomous Republic shall be the Supreme Soviet of that Republic.

Adoption and amendment of the Constitution of an Autonomous Republic; endorsement of state plans for economic and social development, and of the Republic's Budget; and the formation of bodies accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic are the exclusive prerogative of that Supreme Soviet.

Laws of an Autonomous Republic shall be enacted by the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic.

*Article 144.* The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic shall elect a Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic and shall form a Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic, i.e. the Government of that Republic.

## Chapter 19

### Local Bodies of State Authority and Administration

*Article 145.* The bodies of state authority in Territories, Regions, Autonomous Regions, Autonomous Areas, districts, cities, city districts, settlements, and rural communities shall be the corresponding Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 146.* Local Soviets of People's Deputies shall deal with all matters of local significance in accordance with the interests of the whole state and of the citizens residing in the area under their jurisdiction, implement decisions of higher bodies of state authority, guide the work of lower Soviets of People's Deputies, take part in the discussion of matters of Republican and All-Union significance, and submit their proposals concerning them.

Local Soviets of People's Deputies shall direct state, economic, social and cultural development within their territory; endorse plans for economic and social development and the local budget; exercise general guidance over state bodies, enterprises, institutions and organisations subordinate to them; ensure observance of the laws, maintenance of law and order, and protection of citizens' rights; and help strengthen the country's defence capacity.

*Article 147.* Within their powers, local Soviets of People's Deputies shall ensure the comprehensive, all-round economic and social devel-

opment of their area; exercise control over the observance of legislation by enterprises, institutions and organisations subordinate to higher authorities and located in their area; and coordinate and supervise their activity as regards land use, nature conservation, building, employment of manpower, production of consumer goods, and social, cultural, communal and other services and amenities for the public.

*Article 148.* Local Soviets of People's Deputies shall decide matters within the powers accorded them by the legislation of the USSR and of the appropriate Union Republic and Autonomous Republic. Their decisions shall be binding on all enterprises, institutions, and organisations located in their area and on officials and citizens.

*Article 149.* The executive-administrative bodies of local Soviets shall be the Executive Committees elected by them from among their deputies.

Executive Committees shall report on their work at least once a year to the Soviets that elected them and to meetings of citizens at their places of work or residence.

*Article 150.* Executive Committees of local Soviets of People's Deputies shall be directly accountable both to the Soviet that elected them and to the higher executive and administrative body.

## VII.

### JUSTICE, ARBITRATION, AND PROCURATOR'S SUPERVISION

#### Chapter 20

#### Courts and Arbitration

*Article 151.* In the USSR justice is administered only by the courts.

In the USSR there are the following courts: the Supreme Court of the USSR, the Supreme Courts of Union Republics, the Supreme Courts of Autonomous Republics, Territorial, Regional, and city courts, courts of Autonomous Regions, courts of Autonomous Areas, district (city) people's courts, and military tribunals in the Armed Forces.

*Article 152.* All courts in the USSR shall be formed on the principle of the electiveness of judges and people's assessors.

People's judges of district (city) people's courts shall be elected for a term of five years by the citizens of the district (city) on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. People's assessors of district (city) people's courts shall be elected for a term of two

and a half years at meetings of citizens at their places of work or residence by a show of hands.

Higher courts shall be elected for a term of five years by the corresponding Soviet of People's Deputies.

The judges of military tribunals shall be elected for a term of five years by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and people's assessors for a term of two and a half years by meetings of servicemen.

Judges and people's assessors are responsible and accountable to their electors or the bodies that elected them, shall report to them, and may be recalled by them in the manner prescribed by law.

*Article 153.* The Supreme Court of the USSR is the highest judicial body in the USSR and supervises the administration of justice by the courts of the USSR and Union Republics within the limits established by law.

The Supreme Court of the USSR shall be elected by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, members, and people's assessors. The Chairmen of the Supreme Courts of Union Republics are *ex officio* members of the Supreme Court of the USSR.

The organisation and procedure of the Supreme Court of the USSR are defined in the Law on the Supreme Court of the USSR.

*Article 154.* The hearing of civil and criminal cases in all courts is collegial; in courts of first instance cases are heard with the participation of people's assessors. In the administration of justice people's assessors have all the rights of a judge.

*Article 155.* Judges and people's assessors are independent and subject only to the law.

*Article 156.* Justice is administered in the USSR on the principle of the equality of citizens before the law and the court.

*Article 157.* Proceedings in all courts shall be open to the public. Hearings *in camera* are only allowed in cases provided for by law, with observance of all the rules of judicial procedure.

*Article 158.* A defendant in a criminal action is guaranteed the right to legal assistance.

*Article 159.* Judicial proceedings shall be conducted in the language of the Union Republic, Autonomous Republic, Autonomous Region, or Autonomous Area, or in the language spoken by the majority of the people in the locality. Persons participating in court proceedings, who do not know the language in which they are being conducted, shall be ensured the right to become fully acquainted with the materials in the case; the services of an interpreter during the proceedings; and the right to address the court in their own language.

*Article 160.* No one may be adjudged guilty of a crime and subjected to punishment as a criminal except by the sentence of a court and in conformity with the law.

*Article 161.* Colleges of advocates are available to give legal assistance to citizens and organisations. In cases provided for by legislation citizens shall be given legal assistance free of charge.

The organisation and procedure of the bar are determined by legislation of the USSR and Union Republics.

*Article 162.* Representatives of public organisations and of work collectives may take part in civil and criminal proceedings.

*Article 163.* Economic disputes between enterprises, institutions, and organisations are settled by state arbitration bodies within the limits of their jurisdiction.

The organisation and manner of functioning of state arbitration bodies are defined in the Law on State Arbitration in the USSR.

## Chapter 21

### The Procurator's Office

*Article 164.* Supreme power of supervision over the strict and uniform observance of laws by all ministries, state committees and departments, enterprises, institutions and organisations, executive-administrative bodies of local Soviets of People's Deputies, collective farms, co-operatives and other public organisations, officials and citizens is vested in the Procurator-General of the USSR and procurators subordinate to him.

*Article 165.* The Procurator-General of the USSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and is responsible and accountable to it and, between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 166.* The procurators of Union Republics, Autonomous Republics, Territories, Regions and Autonomous Regions are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR. The procurators of Autonomous Areas and district and city procurators are appointed by the Procurators of Union Republics, subject to confirmation by the Procurator-General of the USSR.

*Article 167.* The term of office of the Procurator-General of the USSR and all lower-ranking procurators shall be five years.

*Article 168.* The agencies of the Procurator's Office exercise their powers independently of any local bodies whatsoever, and are subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

The organisation and procedure of the agencies of the Procurator's Office are defined in the Law on the Procurator's Office of the USSR.

## VIII.

### THE EMBLEM, FLAG, ANTHEM, AND CAPITAL OF THE USSR

*Article 169.* The State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a hammer and sickle on a globe depicted in the rays of the sun and framed by ears of wheat, with the inscription "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the languages of the Union Republics. At the top of the Emblem is a five-pointed star.

*Article 170.* The State Flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a rectangle of red cloth with a hammer and sickle depicted in gold in the upper corner next to the staff and with a five-pointed red star edged in gold above them. The ratio of the width of the flag to its length is 1:2.

*Article 171.* The State Anthem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is confirmed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Article 172.* The Capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the city of Moscow.

## IX.

### THE LEGAL FORCE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE USSR AND PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

*Article 173.* The Constitution of the USSR shall have supreme legal force. All laws and other acts of state bodies shall be promulgated on the basis of and in conformity with it.

*Article 174.* The Constitution of the USSR may be amended by a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total number of Deputies of each of its chambers.

Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th  
Session of the Supreme Soviet of the  
USSR (9th Convocation) on 7 Octo-  
ber 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1977, No. 41, Item 617

### REGULATIONS ON THE STATE EMBLEM OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*(Excerpt)*

1. The State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a symbol of the state sovereignty of the USSR, the indestructible alliance

of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the friendship and brotherhood of the working people of all the country's nations and nationalities, and the state unity of the Soviet people which is building a communist society.

2. The State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a hammer and sickle on a globe depicted in the rays of the sun and framed by ears of wheat, with the inscription "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the languages of the Union Republics. At the top of the Emblem is a five-pointed star.

The inscriptions on the State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the languages of the Union Republics are reproduced on the ribbon framing the ears of wheat: from bottom to top on the left-hand side—in Ukrainian, Uzbek, Georgian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Tajik and Turkmenian; on the right-hand side—in Byelorussian, Kazakh, Azerbaijan, Moldavian, Kirkhizian, Armenian and Estonian.

In the coloured State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the hammer and sickle, sun and ears of wheat are golden; the water surface of the globe is blue and the continents are light brown; the ribbon is red; and the stars are edged in gold.

Approved by a Decree of the  
Presidium of the Supreme Soviet  
of the USSR of 31 March 1980

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR,*  
1980, No. 14, Item 262

## REGULATIONS

### ON THE STATE FLAG OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*(Excerpt)*

1. The State Flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a symbol of the Soviet state created by the Great October Socialist Revolution, of the state sovereignty of the USSR, the indestructible alliance of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the friendship and brotherhood of the working people of all the country's nations and nationalities, and the state unity of the Soviet people who are building a communist society.

2. The State Flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a rectangle of red cloth with a hammer and sickle depicted in gold in the upper corner next to the staff and with a red five-pointed star edged in gold above them. The ratio of the width of the flag to its length is 1:2.

4. When the State Flag of the USSR is hoisted together with the State Flag of a Union Republic the State Flag of the USSR may not be smaller in size than the State Flag of the Union Republic.

Approved by a Decree of the  
Presidium of the Supreme Soviet  
of the USSR of 15 August 1980

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*,  
1980, No. 34, Item 692

NATIONAL ANTHEM  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*An unbreakable Union of freeborn Republics  
Great Russia has welded forever to stand;  
Created in struggle by will of the peoples,  
United and mighty, our Soviet Land!*

*Hail to our Motherland, free from oppression,  
Bulwark of peoples in brotherhood strong!  
The Party of Lenin, strength of the nation,  
Leads us to communism steadfastly on!*

*Through tempests the sun of our freedom blazed for us,  
The greatness of Lenin shone bright in the lead:  
The peoples he roused to a cause just and glorious,  
Inspired us in work and in valorous deed!*

*Hail to our Motherland, free from oppression,  
Bulwark of peoples in brotherhood strong!  
The Party of Lenin, strength of the nation,  
Leads us to communism steadfastly on!*

*The communist way shall prevail in our own land,  
In its great triumph our future we see,  
And to the Red Flag of our glorious homeland  
Devoted and loyal we ever shall be!*

*Hail to our Motherland, free from oppression,  
Bulwark of peoples in brotherhood strong!  
The Party of Lenin, strength of the nation,  
Leads us to communism steadfastly on!*

Approved by a Decree of the  
Presidium of the Supreme Soviet  
of the USSR of 27 May 1977

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta SSSR*,  
1977, No. 24, Item 352

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE RUSSIAN  
SOVIET FEDERATIVE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, overthrew capitalist and landowner rule, broke the fetters of oppression, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, and created the Soviet state, a new type of state, the basic instrument for defending the gains of the revolution and for building socialism and communism.

Soviet power guaranteed all the peoples of Russia equal rights and free self-determination, and granted the working people truly democratic rights and freedoms. The formation of the RSFSR provided the Russian people, all the nations and nationalities of the Russian Federation, with favourable conditions for all-round economic, social and cultural development, with due account of their specific national features in the fraternal family of the Soviet peoples.

The unification of the RSFSR and the other Soviet Republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics multiplied the forces and opportunities of the peoples of the country in the carrying out of radical socio-economic transformations.

As a result of the constructive activity of the Soviet people under the leadership of the Communist Party a developed socialist society has been built in the USSR, a society of true freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, the well-being and culture of the people is constantly rising, and the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia is growing stronger.

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic is a Republic enjoying equal rights within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which embodies the state unity of the Soviet people, and unites all the nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

The people of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware of being constituent part of the whole Soviet people, and preserving continuity of the ideas and principles of the Constitution of the RSFSR of 1918, the Constitution of the RSFSR of 1925, and the Constitution of the RSFSR of 1937, and in accordance with the

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (9th Convocation) on 12 April 1978.

Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR and defined the rights, freedoms and obligations of citizens, and the principles of the organisation of the socialist state of the whole people, and its aims, hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, the working people of all the nations and nationalities of the Republic.

*Article 2.* All power in the RSFSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the RSFSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aims of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of nations, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Proceeding from this, the RSFSR guarantees to the USSR, as represented by its highest bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the spheres listed in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the RSFSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The RSFSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta RSFSR,*  
1978, No. 15, Item 407

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TURKMEN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the triumphant Great October Socialist Revolution, made under the leadership of the Communist Party with Lenin at its

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen SSR (9th Convocation) on 13 April 1978.

head, the establishment of Soviet power, and the consistent implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy, the working people of our country have carried out far-reaching socio-economic transformations, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for labouring people—in which they have created powerful productive forces, and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and consolidating the unbreakable alliance of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia.

After the victory of the Great October Revolution the Turkmen people for the first time acquired national statehood and within a brief historical period overcame their age-old backwardness. In the fraternal family of Soviet peoples Turkmenistan has become an industrial-agrarian socialist republic with a highly developed industry and agriculture, an advanced science and culture.

The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all the nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism, aware that they are an integral part of the entire Soviet people, preserving the continuity of the ideas and principles of the 1927 and the 1937 Constitutions of the Turkmen SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens and laid down the principles and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia of all the Republic's nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Turkmen SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Turkmen SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with

the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Proceeding from this, the Turkmen SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the sphere listed in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Turkmen SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Turkmen SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Turkmenskoy SSR, 1978, No. 7, Item 30*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE ESTONIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, overthrew capitalist and landowner rule, broke the fetters of oppression, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, and created the Soviet state, a new type of state, the basic instrument for defending the gains of the revolution and for building socialism and communism.

Soviet power in Estonia was established in October 1917.

After the defeat of the Estland Labour Commune which was born of the Great October but collapsed under the blows of the united forces of international imperialism and internal counter-revolution, the Communists of Estonia led the working people's struggle for the overthrow of bourgeois power in the most difficult conditions of underground work and terror. In 1940 this struggle ended with the restoration of Soviet power. The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic joined the great family of Soviet peoples of its own accord.

Led by the Communist Party, the working people of our country have carried out far-reaching socio-economic reforms, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR (9th Convocation) on 13 April 1978.

productive forces, and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and consolidating the unbreakable alliance of the working class, the collective-farm peasantry and the people's intelligentsia.

The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all the nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which affirmed the principles of the socialist system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, aware that they are an integral part of the entire Soviet people, hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Estonian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Estonian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of nations, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Proceeding from this, the Estonian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Estonian SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Estonian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, overthrew capitalist and landowner rule, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, and created the Soviet state, the basic instrument for defending the gains of the Revolution and for building socialism and communism.

As a result of the constructive activity of the Soviet people led by the Communist Party the Soviet Union has built a developed socialist society, a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which they have created powerful productive forces, established mature socialist social relations, are steadily improving the people's welfare and culture, and have consolidated the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia and formed a new historical community—the Soviet people.

The Great October Revolution marked a radical turning point in the destinies of all nations and nationalities in our country. Having embarked on the path of socialist revolution, the workers and peasants of Byelorussia for the first time in history, with the aid of the Russian proletariat, acquired their own statehood and formed the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

The unification of the Byelorussian SSR and the other Soviet Republics into a single federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—has multiplied the strength and potentialities of the peoples of our country in effecting radical socio-economic changes, in building socialism and defending its great gains.

Under socialism, thanks to the consistent implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy of the Party and to the many-sided fraternal assistance rendered to us by the great Russian people and the peoples of all the Soviet Republics, the working people of Byelorussia have achieved tremendous successes in developing their economy, science and culture.

The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all the nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR (9th Convocation) on 14 April 1978.

Guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware that they are an integral part of the whole Soviet people, preserving continuity of our country's constitutional development, the ideas and principles of the 1919 and the 1927 Constitutions of the Byelorussian SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which embodied the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, laid down the principles of organisation and the aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Byelorussian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Byelorussian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Proceeding from this, the Byelorussian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Byelorussian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Sbornik zakonov Byelorusskoy SSR*  
(Collected Laws of the Byelorussian  
SSR), 1978, No. 11, Item 213

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE TAJIK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our country led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful productive forces, and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and consolidating the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic hereby proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

Article 2. All power in the Tajik SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Tajik SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of nations,

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Tajik SSR (9th Convocation) on 14 April 1978.

and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Tajik SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Tajik SSR exercises independent authority on its territory.

*Article 69.* The Tajik SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Tajikskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Tajik SSR), 1978, No. 8, Item 83*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE ARMENIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, was a historic turning point in the life of the Armenian people, and the other peoples of the country, ushered in a new epoch in its history, an epoch of social and national resurgence, the establishment of its socialist statehood.

As a result of the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our country led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful productive forces and are steadily improving their well-being and culture, and strengthening the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR (9th Convocation) on 14 April 1978.

unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, and established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, the principles of the organisation and the aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Armenian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Armenian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Armenian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Armenian SSR exercises independent authority on its territory.

*Article 69.* The Armenian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Ar-*  
*myanskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme*  
*Soviet of the Armenian SSR), 1978,*  
*No. 7, Item 81*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE GEORGIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the triumphant Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power, the working people of our country, under the leadership of the Communist Party founded by Lenin, have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which they have created powerful productive forces and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and strengthening the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

The Great October Revolution played a decisive role in the destinies of the Georgian people. Soviet power won the day on 25 February 1921 under the leadership of the Communist Party and with the fraternal assistance of Soviet Russia.

The voluntary unification of Georgia into the single family of Soviet Republics predetermined the all-round development and flowering of the Georgian people.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all the nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware of being an integral part of the whole Soviet people, preserving continuity of the ideas and principles of the 1922, the 1927 and the 1937 Constitutions of the Georgian SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nations and nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Georgian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies,

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian SSR (9th Convocation) on 15 April 1978.

which constitute the political foundation of the Georgian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of nations, and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Georgian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Georgian SSR exercises independent authority on its territory.

*Article 69.* The Georgian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Gru-  
zinskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme  
Soviet of the Georgian SSR), 1978,  
No. 4, Item 75*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the triumphant Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our country led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful productive forces and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and strengthening the unbreakable alliance

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR (9th Convocation) on 15 April 1978.

of the working people, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism. By faithfully following Lenin's behests and relying on the tremendous assistance given by the great Russian people and the country's other peoples the working people of Moldavia have upheld the revolutionary gains of the Great October Revolution, acquired socialist statehood and achieved colossal successes in economic, social and cultural development.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Moldavian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Moldavian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Moldavian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state authority and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Moldavian SSR exercises independent authority on its territory.

*Article 69.* The Moldavian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Moldavskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR), 1978, No. 4, Item 41*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE LATVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the triumphant Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our country under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful productive forces and are steadily improving their well-being and culture and strengthening the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia.

The working people of Latvia took an active part in the joint revolutionary struggle of the peoples of Russia for the victory of the Great October Revolution and the creation of the Soviet state. Their struggle ended with the formation of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Latvia. However, at that time, under pressure from international imperialism and the nationalist bourgeoisie they did not succeed in upholding the revolutionary gains. Under the bourgeois dictatorship the working people of Latvia, led by the Communist Party and inspired by the successes of communist construction in the USSR, carried on a selfless struggle for the restoration of Soviet power. In 1940 this struggle ended in the victory of the socialist revolution and the restoration of Soviet power. The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic came into existence and voluntarily joined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the basis of self-determination.

The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR (9th Convocation) on 18 April 1978.

Guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware of being an integral part of the whole Soviet people, preserving continuity of the constitutional development of the Soviet land, and the ideas and principles of the 1919 Constitution of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Latvia and the 1940 Constitution of the Latvian SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Latvian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Latvian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics ... in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Latvian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR the Latvian SSR exercises independent authority on its territory.

*Article 69.* The Latvian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Latvviyskoy SSR* (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR), 1978, No. 17

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UZBEK SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, was an outstanding historic event in the life of the peoples of the Soviet land and signified a radical turning point in the destiny of the people of Uzbekistan as well.

Having embarked on the path of socialist revolution, the working people of Uzbekistan with the fraternal assistance of the Russian proletariat smashed the exploiter system, acquired their own statehood for the first time in their history and made the transition from feudalism to socialism, by-passing capitalism.

The formation of the Uzbek SSR and its voluntary unification with the other fraternal Union Republics into a single multinational Soviet socialist state, the USSR, has immeasurably multiplied the forces and possibilities of the working people of the Republic in the building of the new society.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party the working people of our country have carried out far-reaching changes, defended the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people—in which they have created powerful productive forces and are steadily raising their well-being and culture and strengthening the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia. A new historical community—the Soviet people—has come into existence.

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism, aware of being an integral part of the whole Soviet people, and preserving continuity of the constitutional development of our country, the ideas and principles of the 1927 and the 1937 Constitutions of the Uzbek SSR and in accordance with the 1977 Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens and laid down the principles of the organisation

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR (9th Convocation) on 19 April 1978.

and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, dehkans and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nations and nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Uzbek SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Uzbek SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of nations and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Uzbek SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Uzbek SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Uzbek SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Uzbekskoy SSR* (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR), 1978, No. 12, Item 172

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR (9th Convocation) on 20 April 1978.

by Lenin, overthrew the power of the capitalists and landlords, established the dictatorship of the proletariat and created the Soviet state—the basic instrument for defending revolutionary gains, socialist and communist construction. Soviet power liberated the peoples of Russia from social and national oppression and guaranteed their equality and the right to free self-determination.

As a result of the constructive activity of the working people led by the Communist Party, our country has built up a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, mature socialist social relations have taken root, the well-being and culture of the people are rising, the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia is being strengthened, and a new historical community of people—the Soviet people—has emerged. Thanks to the consistent implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy and the construction of socialism in the USSR, the national question has been solved successfully for the first time in history.

The Great October Revolution meant a radical change in the destinies of the Ukrainian people. Having embarked on the path of socialist revolution, the workers and peasants of the Ukraine, with the fraternal assistance of the Russian proletariat, crushed the exploiting system, defeated the bourgeois nationalist counter-revolution, and created for the first time in their history their own state—the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

The unification of the fraternal Soviet republics in an integral, federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—multiplied the forces and potentialities of the peoples of our country in carrying out far-reaching socio-economic changes and defending the great gains of socialism. The working people of the Ukraine have great prospects for rapid progress in all spheres of social life, for the unprecedented growth of the economy and the flowering of culture. The Ukrainian people reunified in a single state—a Soviet socialist state.

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware of being an integral part of the whole Soviet people, preserving continuity of the constitutional development of our country, and the ideas and principles of the 1919, the 1929 and the 1937 Constitutions of the Ukrainian SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of 1977, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the

rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Ukrainian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Ukrainian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Ukrainian SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR the Ukrainian SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Ukrainian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Ukrainskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR), 1978, No. 18, Item 268*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE KAZAKH SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR (9th Convocation) on 20 April 1978.

country led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, the well-being and culture of the people are rising, and the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia is being strengthened.

The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic hereby proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Kazakh SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Kazakh SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Kazakh SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Kazakh SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Kazakh SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Kazahskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR), 1978, No. 18*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE LITHUANIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our country led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, the well-being and culture of the people are steadily rising, and the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia is being strengthened.

Inspired by the victory of the Great October Revolution, the workers and peasants of Lithuania proclaimed the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic in December 1918. However, they could not uphold the gains of the Revolution under the pressure of international imperialism and the nationalist bourgeoisie. The working people of Lithuania, led by the Communist Party, persistently fought against the bourgeois dictatorship and in 1940 restored the Soviet power. On the basis of the free self-determination of its people, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily joined the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the ideas of scientific communism, aware of being an integral part of the whole Soviet people, developing the constitutional legislation of the Republic and preserving continuity of the ideas and principles of the 1940 Constitution of the Lithuanian SSR, and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and the policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and du-

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR (9th Convocation) on 20 April 1978.

ties of citizens, and laid down the principles of organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Lithuanian SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Lithuanian SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Lithuanian SSR vests in the USSR, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR the Lithuanian SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Lithuanian SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Litovskoy SSR* (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR), 1978, No. 11, Item 130

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE KIRGHIZ SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

As a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet power the working people of our coun-

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kirghiz SSR (9th Convocation) on 20 April 1978.

try led by the Communist Party have carried out far-reaching socio-economic changes, upheld the gains of socialism and built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, the well-being and culture of the people are steadily rising, and the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry and people's intelligentsia is being strengthened.

The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Guided by the lofty ideals of communism and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and the policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens and laid down the principles of organisation and aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic hereby proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Kirghiz SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Kirghiz SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Kirghiz SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR the Kirghiz SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Kirghiz SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Kirghizskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Kirghiz SSR), 1978, No. 8, Item 50*

**CONSTITUTION  
(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)  
OF THE AZERBAIJAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>**

*(Excerpt)*

The Great October Socialist Revolution, made by the workers and peasants of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Lenin, ushered in a new era in the history of mankind and heralded a turning point in the destinies of the peoples of our multinational country.

Under the banner of the Great October Revolution the working class and labouring peasantry of Azerbaijan overthrew the power of the landlords and capitalists, smashed the shackles of oppression, established the dictatorship of the proletariat and for the first time in their history created their own Soviet state—the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic.

Expressing the will of the Azerbaijan people, the Azerbaijan SSR united with the other equal Soviet Republics in a single federal state—the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The formation of the USSR multiplied the forces and possibilities of the country's peoples in the building of socialism.

In close union of fraternal Soviet Republics, thanks to the great historic advantages of the socialist social system and the consistent implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy of the CPSU, the working people of the Azerbaijan SSR have attained outstanding successes in all spheres of life—economic, political, social and cultural.

As a result of the constructive activity of the Soviet people led by the Communist Party, the USSR has built a developed socialist society—a society of genuine freedom for the working people, in which powerful productive forces have been created, mature socialist social relations have taken root, the well-being and culture of the people are steadily rising, and the unbreakable alliance of the working class, collective-farm peasantry, and people's intelligentsia is being strengthened.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic is an equal Republic within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which symbolises the state

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR (9th Convocation) on 21 April 1978.

unity of the Soviet people and rallies all nations and nationalities for the joint building of communism.

Aware of being an integral part of the Soviet people, guided by the ideas of scientific communism, true to their revolutionary and internationalist traditions, preserving continuity of the ideas and principles of the 1921, the 1925, and the 1937 Constitutions of the Azerbaijan SSR and in accordance with the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which has affirmed the principles of the social system and policy of the USSR, established the rights, freedoms and duties of citizens, and laid down the principles of the organisation and the aims of the socialist state of the whole people, the people of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic hereby adopt and proclaim the present Constitution.

*Article 1.* The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of the whole people, expressing the will and interests of the workers, peasants and intelligentsia, the Republic's working people of all nationalities.

*Article 2.* All power in the Azerbaijan SSR belongs to the people.

The people exercise state power through Soviets of People's Deputies, which constitute the political foundation of the Azerbaijan SSR.

All other state bodies are under the control of, and accountable to, the Soviets of People's Deputies.

*Article 68.* The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic is a sovereign Soviet socialist state. With the aim of the successful building of communist society, of strengthening economic and political unity, and of safeguarding the country's security and defence, the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, as a result of the free self-determination of its people and on a voluntary and equal basis, has united, together with the Soviet Socialist Republics . . . in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, an integral, federal, multinational state.

Acting on this, the Azerbaijan SSR vests in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its higher bodies of state power and administration, the rights defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside the scope of jurisdiction defined in Article 73 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Azerbaijan SSR exercises independent authority in its territory.

*Article 69.* The Azerbaijan SSR retains the right freely to secede from the USSR.

*Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Sovieta Azerbajjanskoy SSR (Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR), 1978, No. 8, Item 65*

RESOLUTION  
OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF THE SOVIET UNION

ON THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION  
OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*(Excerpt)*

Sixty years ago, on 30 December 1922, by the will of the peoples of our country, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was created, the world's first single federal multinational state of workers and peasants.

The sixtieth anniversary of the USSR is an important event in the life of the Soviet people, a testimony to the triumph of the Leninist nationalities policy of the CPSU and the historical achievements of socialism. At this great anniversary the Soviet Union faces the world as an harmonious family of equal republics jointly building communism. The social, political and ideological unity of our society is indivisible. And the cohesion of the Soviet people with their Communist Party and its Central Committee, led by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, the faithful follower of Lenin's great work, is indestructible.

Soviet people are greeting this happy event with new successes in all spheres of social life, implementing by their determined creative labour the plans of communist construction drawn up by the 26th CPSU Congress. Guided by the Congress decisions, the Party and the people are conducting a determined campaign to remove the threat of war and to strengthen world peace.

*The birth of the USSR was the result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution.* The October Revolution rent the chains of social and national oppression and raised all the peoples of our country to independent historical creativity. The establishment of the power of the working class and of public ownership of the means of production laid a firm foundation for the free development of all nations and nationalities and for their close unity and friendship.

The working class of Russia acted as a guiding force in international unity. By the selfless heroism of its revolutionary struggle against autocracy and capitalism, by its courage and steadfastness on the fronts of the Civil War and by its dedicated labour and consistent internationalism it earned the recognition and trust of the working people of all nationalities. The working class led the labouring masses to the Soviet system, as Lenin foresaw it would. The idea of Soviet organisation was close to the labouring masses of Russia, it was simple and applicable to the most varied conditions of their life.

A decisive role in the creation of the single federal state was played by the RSFSR, around which all the Soviet Republics joined together on a voluntary basis. As the first multinational Soviet state, the RSFSR was a prototype of the USSR. Regardless of difficulties and privations, the Russian people rendered disinterested assistance to the country's other peoples in the defence of their revolutionary gains and made an inestimable contribution to overcoming the backwardness of the former national borderlands.

*The formation of the USSR was the great contribution of the Leninist Bolshevik party, multinational in composition and profoundly internationalist in ideology, politics, organisational structure and the principles of work.* By its tireless defence of the vital interests of the working class and the broad masses, devotion to communist ideals, profound attention to the national interests and feelings of all peoples, and irreconcilability to all manifestations of bourgeois nationalism, chauvinism and national nihilism, the Party won the noble right to be the leader of the working people of all the country's nations and nationalities. By its consistent theoretical, political and organisational work, the Party cultivated in them a firm desire for unity and mobilised their will and efforts to achieve their common goal—the construction of socialism and communism. The Party contributed its tireless labour, the talents and enthusiasm of its members, and the knowledge and organising skill of its cadres to the cause of the social and national liberation of the country's peoples, to improving their economy and culture.

*The creation of the USSR is a living embodiment of the ideas of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and of the Leninist principles of the national policy.* On the basis of a scientific analysis of the new age, Lenin developed creatively and comprehensively the views of Marx and Engels on the national question. He saw the main way of solving it in the class struggle of the proletariat to win political power and create a new society free from exploitation. Lenin profoundly substantiated the need for the closest union of Soviet Republics to fulfil the tasks of socialist construction and the defence of the homeland from imperialist encroachments. He saw a guarantee of the stability of this union in full mutual trust, voluntary agreement and the exclusion of all forms of inequality in the relations between nations. A convinced internationalist, he fought consistently and irreconcilably for a revolutionary alliance of all the working people and against all extremes in the solving of national problems. Lenin's political and organisational genius and his colossal work united into a single whole the strength of the militant organisation of Communists, the revolutionary energy of the proletariat and the invincible desire of the peoples for national

equality and freedom. The ideas elaborated by him have been put into practice.

History knows of no other state that has done so much in such a short time for the all-round development of nations and nationalities as the USSR, the socialist Motherland of all our peoples. Their unity became tempered and strong in the course of industrialisation, the collectivisation of agriculture, the cultural revolution, and the struggle to build socialism. In the bitter years of the Great Patriotic War the fraternal peoples rose as one man to the defence of the homeland, showed mass heroism and the inexorable will to win, defeated the Nazi invaders and saved the peoples of the world from enslavement and destruction. The post-war economic recovery was an unforgettable feat performed by the whole people.

The peoples of the Soviet country know from their own experience that alliance in a single union augments their strength and accelerates socio-economic development. We are justly proud of the fact that, together with the working people of all the country's nations, the peoples of the former national borderlands, formerly doomed to centuries of backwardness, marched confidently to the socialist future, bypassing capitalism, and achieved the heights of social progress. In the joint struggle for a new, just world there arose a great fraternity of the people of labour, the sense of a united family, and the indestructible Leninist friendship of peoples—inexhaustible sources of the creative activity of the masses.

The past sixty years are marked by the rapid socio-political development of the Soviet Union. Over this period the national income has constantly increased. The share of the USSR in world industrial output has risen from one per cent in 1922 to twenty at the present time.

In the harmonious family of peoples the economies of all the Soviet Republics are growing dynamically. A modern industry, agriculture and science and a true flowering of culture are characteristic of each of them today. At the same time they have their own identity, their own national features.

*The building of a developed socialist society was the result of the revolutionary-transforming activity of the peoples united under the leadership of the Communist Party into the USSR. Mature socialist social relations have been established in the country and the task of bringing the economic development of the Soviet Republics up to the same level has, in the main, been solved. The juridical and practical equality of all nations and nationalities has been guaranteed. And a new historical community of people has been formed—the Soviet people. This community is based on the indivisibility of the historical*

fates of Soviet people, on profound objective changes of both a material and a spiritual nature, and on the indestructible alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia. It is the result of the growing internationalisation of economic and social life as a whole, of the development in our country of socialist nations between which there have developed relations of full equality, fraternal mutual help and cooperation, respect and mutual trust.

Our homeland's crossing of new frontiers of socio-economic progress has enabled the Party and the people to fulfil the tasks of ever increasing dimensions and complexity, of creating the material and technical base of communism, raising further the well-being and culture of the working people, developing socio-class and national relations, improving socialist statehood and democracy and educating the new man. An extensive detailed programme for solving these tasks was put forward by the 26th CPSU Congress.

*In mature socialist society, a single economic complex, the material basis of the fraternal friendship of the peoples of the USSR, is developing successfully.* The Soviet Union is a mighty industrial power with a highly mechanised agriculture and an advanced science and culture.

The economy of each republic occupies an important place in the social division of labour and is making an increasingly weighty contribution to the country's national wealth. Multinational production, research and creative work teams have been established everywhere and are working successfully. This is a remarkable social and socio-political phenomenon of our times.

The further development of all the Soviet Republics will be greatly promoted by the solution of such major national economic tasks as the opening up and development of the energy and raw material resources in Siberia, the Far East and the North, the Baikal-Amur Railway area, and the non-black-earth zone. This requires the joint efforts of the working people of all Republics, the active mobilisation of their material and labour resources.

*As the 26th Congress noted, the Party's course envisages the growth of the material and spiritual potential of each republic and, at the same time, its maximum use for the harmonious development of the whole country.* The Party sees this as an essential condition for the progress of Soviet society, for strengthening the economic and defence capacity of the USSR, and improving the well-being of the working people. Centralised planning combined with the broad initiative of the Union and Autonomous Republics and the Autonomous regions and areas makes it possible to ensure the balanced and efficient development of the Soviet economy. To fulfil all economic and social tasks,

first and foremost, from the standpoint of the whole state, to combat all manifestations of regionalism and departmentalism—this is an essential requirement for a truly Party, internationalist approach to the matter.

*In modern conditions the drawing closer together of all the classes and social groups of Soviet society is continuing, leading to the development of what is primarily and basically a non-class structure of society within the historical framework of mature socialism.* The decisive force in this process, its “social mind and social heart” (Marx) is the working class. In its economic position, ideology, psychology and morals it has always been and will always be the most consistent exponent of the international solidarity and fraternity of the working people. The CPSU is doing everything necessary to ensure the constant growth of the ideological maturity, social activity, and general culture and professional skills of our multinational working class and its role in solving key problems of the present-day policy.

The seventies saw an increase in all the national contingents of the Soviet working class, particularly in those republics where its proportion in the population was below the average for the country as a whole. The Party will continue to pay constant attention to the training of skilled workers of the indigenous nationalities. All this is promoting an extension of the influence of the working class on the development of society and strengthening the social basis of the unity of all classes and groups, nations and nationalities.

The implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy is organically linked with profound changes in the social make-up, culture and living conditions of the collective-farm peasantry of the Soviet Republics. The solution of the food problem and the higher culture of farming and cattle breeding are today major economic and political tasks. The fulfilling of these tasks requires further strengthening of the material and technical base of agriculture, development of agro-industrial integration, improved training and placing of the personnel, and improved working and living conditions in the countryside.

The USSR is at the forefront of world science, technology and culture, and this is largely thanks to the Soviet multinational intelligentsia. Large contingents of engineering and technical, scientific and artistic intelligentsia, teachers and doctors have been established and continue to grow in each republic. It is important to improve further the system of planning and the quality of training, to take into account more precisely in their distribution the real needs of the republics and of the USSR as a whole, and to make fuller use of their creative potential in the interests of communist construction.

*In mature socialist society the democratic nature of the social policy*

*of the CPSU and the Soviet state is manifesting itself with increasing clarity.* It is aimed at solving such urgent matters for all nations and nationalities as raising the well-being, education and culture of the working people, improving their work and leisure conditions, developing housing construction, improving the system of social security, medical care and the services, and environmental control. In the seventies, a most extensive programme in the country's history for raising the living standards was implemented. Almost double the amount of funds spent in the previous decade was allocated for it. As a result, real incomes per head of the population rose by almost fifty per cent. And what socialism has achieved in socio-economic development, in raising the material and cultural level of people's lives, is a whole epoch.

At the same time the Party sees unsolved problems, difficulties and shortcomings. The CPSU is mobilising Communists and the whole working people to overcome them. Soviet people took the following words spoken by Leonid Brezhnev at the November (1981) Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU as a Party militant order: "We must work better. Draw up plans better and carry them out better. Organise production better and produce better. In short, work more efficiently."

The Party is striving to ensure that with the general rise in the consumption of material and intellectual goods the differences, inherited from the past, between social groups and regions, between town and countryside are steadily overcome, and that just socialist principles of distribution are consistently observed and their distortion not permitted.

An atmosphere for collectivism and comradeship, cohesion, friendship of all nations and nationalities, a morally healthy society, true democracy and social optimism, intolerance of deviations from socialist morality—these are the most important aspects of the Soviet way of life. The noble humanism of relations between nations that has been firmly established in our country stands out with particular clarity against the background of the aggravation of national contradictions in the capitalist countries, the rampant nationalism, chauvinism and racism there.

The whole world is aware of the cruel exploitation of and discrimination against national minorities and foreign workers in the capitalist countries, whose ruling circles rant hypocritically about "human rights". Those who fight for their civic, national rights in the USA, Northern Ireland, the Republic of South Africa and other countries are subjected to cruel repression and persecution. Any unprejudiced person can see that capitalism is not able to solve the national question which it has itself engendered.

*The formation of the USSR and the establishment of relations of friendship, trust, and mutual assistance between peoples have greatly accelerated the spiritual development of the society born of the Great Revolution. Socialism has succeeded in solving a task of truly historic importance: bestowing on many millions of working people the achievements of culture, giving each person, irrespective of his or her social status and nationality, access to all sources of knowledge. Extensive opportunities have been created in the country for the manifestation of talents and gifts, for the cultural flowering of all nations and nationalities, and for the creative activity of the masses in the field of science and art.*

On the fertile soil of mature socialism there is growing and strengthening a single international culture of the Soviet people, which serves all working people and expresses their common ideals. It is absorbing everything of common significance in the achievements and traditions of the national cultures. Socialist in content, diverse in its national forms, and internationalist in its spirit and character, Soviet culture has become a great force for the ideological and moral rallying of the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union.

Soviet multinational literature is published in dozens of languages of the peoples of the USSR, many of which before the October Revolution did not have their own written language. Russian, voluntarily accepted by Soviet people as a common language, has become an important factor in strengthening the socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people and the development and mutual enrichment of national cultures. It has given all our peoples access to the spiritual riches of world civilisation. Each Soviet citizen, to quote Lenin, has the opportunity of learning the Great Russian language. Today 82 per cent of the population are fluent in it.

In its concern for the development of Soviet culture and the broad use of the rich cultural legacy of the fraternal republics, the CPSU orientates the multinational creative intelligentsia towards the creation of works imbued with Party commitment and popular spirit, worthy of the present and future of our homeland.

*Mature socialism demonstrates clearly the indissoluble interrelation of the flowering and drawing closer together of all the country's nations and nationalities with the deepening of socialist democracy. A historical milestone in the development of Soviet society was the adoption of the new Constitution of the USSR, the true creator of which, as Leonid Brezhnev stressed, was the whole Soviet people. The country-wide discussions and unanimous approval of the Constitution is yet further proof of the desire of the peoples of the USSR to cherish and strengthen their state union.*

Reflecting the steady drawing closer together of the nations, the Constitution of the USSR promotes the further strengthening of the union elements of the multinational state and organically combines socialist federalism with democratic centralism. The Party sees this as a reliable protection against manifestations of regionalism and national narrowness, and also against disregard for the specific interests of nations and nationalities.

The Constitution of the USSR and the Constitutions of the Union and Autonomous Republics reflect in concentrated form the most significant changes that have taken place in the economic, social and spiritual life of Soviet society, the profound democratic nature of our state. They embody the basic foundations of the socialist way of life, common to all the nations and nationalities, strengthen the guarantees of the sovereign rights of the Republics, and enhance their role in the solution of country-wide tasks.

The experience of the USSR has shown that the more extensively socialist democracy develops, the more democratic the country's life, and the greater mutual, voluntary attraction between the working people of all nations and nationalities. Unlike bourgeois democracy, which proclaims the equality of nations in word only, socialist democracy reliably defends the social and national interests and rights of the working people. It creates for each person the real opportunity of taking an increasingly extensive and direct part in managing the affairs of the state and society. This is the main trend in the future development of the Soviet political system.

Democracy under socialism is inconceivable without strong, authoritative state power which enjoys the full confidence of the people. The Soviet state is power established and exercised by the working people themselves, which expresses and defends their vital interests. Through the system of state and Party organisations, trade unions and the Komsomol, the bodies of people's control, work collectives and the mass media, country-wide discussions and election campaigns, the needs and requirements of all classes and social groups, all nations and nationalities of Soviet society are taken into account and realised in practice.

A vivid expression of the community of the political life of all the nations and nationalities, their close unity, are Soviets of People's Deputies, the most massive, sovereign, state bodies. In the Soviets the 2,300,000 elected deputies, Communists and non-Communists, representatives of more than 100 nationalities, deal from the state standpoint with important matters of political, socio-economic and cultural construction, passing through a true school of socialist internationalism.

Practice has shown that the USSR is a dynamic and effective form of state union of Soviet nations and nationalities designed for the whole historical period of the gradual growth of the socialist statehood into communist social self-government.

*Under mature socialism, the role of the leading, guiding and organising activity of the CPSU in the development of the nations and nationalities of the USSR and the strengthening of their fraternal union is growing steadily.* Correct Party leadership, based on Marxist-Leninist principles, is an essential condition for the progress of the multinational socialist society. The Party, the CPSU Central Committee, and Comrade Leonid Brezhnev show constant concern for the utmost strengthening of the inviolable friendship and unity of the peoples of the USSR, and are creatively developing Leninist teaching on the national question.

Communists have always been and will always be supporters of the gradual, increasingly full drawing closer together of nations on a truly democratic, truly internationalist, to quote Lenin, basis. The growth of a classless society is an important milestone in the further development of this law-governed process discovered by Marxist-Leninist science. There is nothing more alien to communist ideology than the desire to push this objective process along artificially or to prevent it. The task is to provide scope for its natural development on the basis of voluntary, equal and fraternal cooperation of the peoples.

Careful consideration of the interests and needs of each nation and nationality, and their organic combination with the interests of the Soviet people as a whole, concerting the efforts of the working people to solve the current tasks of the development of society—all this is at the centre of the attention of the CPSU.

The Party is seeing to it that the new processes and problems in the sphere of national relations, which are constantly being engendered by the development of such a large multinational state as ours, are reflected fully and in good time in the activity of the Party, Soviet, trade union and Komsomol organisations and economic bodies. A reliable means of carrying out this task is the unswerving observance of scientific principles of leadership, the Leninist style of work, and Lenin's personnel policy.

The Soviet Republics are multinational in composition. It is important that all nations should be properly represented on Party and state bodies with careful consideration of the professional, ideological and moral qualities of the person. Since the number of citizens from non-indigenous nationalities, who have specific requirements in the sphere of language, culture and everyday life, has increased in some republics in recent years, Party committees are called upon to take a more pro-

found study of these problems and propose ways of dealing with them in good time.

"In our country the national feelings and national dignity of each person are respected," reads the Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the 26th Congress. "The CPSU has always fought and will continue to fight against such manifestations alien to the nature of socialism as chauvinism or nationalism, against all nationalist distortions such as, say, anti-Semitism or Zionism." In all its activity and its purposive ideological work, the Party seeks to cultivate in the working people Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, a sense of pride at belonging to the single great Soviet Homeland.

Being an internationalist, Lenin stressed, means "thinking not only about your own nation, but putting the interests of all above it". He taught that we must fight against petty national narrow-mindedness, isolation and separateness. True to Lenin's behests, the Party is developing in the working people the ability to approach all national problems from the class standpoint. It is seeking to make every Soviet person understand fully that today the performance of one's international duty means, first and foremost, conscientious, active, creative labour for the common good, all-round improvement in the effectiveness and quality of work, active participation in the solution of country-wide tasks, and further strengthening of the economic and defence capacity of the USSR and of the world socialist community.

*The formation and successful development of the USSR is of permanent international significance and heralds an important historical milestone in the centuries-old struggle of progressive mankind for equality and friendship among peoples, for the revolutionary renewal of the world.*

Events have confirmed Lenin's forecast that a new social order would give rise to completely different international relations, free from the discrimination, domination and subjection characteristic of the capitalist world. An example of these relations is provided by the fraternal socialist countries.

*The inter-state relations inherent in socialism are embodied most fully in the socialist community.* It personifies the new, socialist type of international relations between sovereign, equal states united by common interests and aims and by Marxist-Leninist ideology, and bound by the ties of comradely solidarity, mutual assistance, and all-round cooperation.

The living soul, the guiding and directing force of the countries of the socialist community, are their communist and workers' parties. Experience has shown that loyalty to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism, and the close interaction of the fra-

ternal parties in all spheres, enables each country and the socialist community as a whole to combine the common and national interests of the socialist states, deal successfully with the contradictions and difficulties that arise in the course of development, and move confidently forward. This is firmly promoted by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation.

The socialist countries have attained some indisputable successes in the building of new society. At the same time the international experience of world socialism has confirmed Lenin's idea that the road to socialism would be a complex one. It must not be overlooked that the development of the new system is taking place under constant economic, political, military and ideological pressure from imperialism. Wherever the subversive activity of imperialism is compounded by errors and miscalculations in internal policy, the ground is prepared for an activation of alien, anti-socialist forces. Practice shows how important it is for a ruling communist party to strengthen the link with the masses, to pursue a carefully considered, realistic policy, to cultivate an internationalist spirit in the working people, to deliver a timely and resolute rebuff to the opponents of socialism, and to strengthen solidarity with fraternal states.

The world socialist community is developing steadily. The drawing closer together of the fraternal countries is continuing. It is taking place with due account of their national, historical features, which finds expression in the variety of forms of social life in these countries. Their interaction in the struggle for peace and security of all the peoples is becoming increasingly close. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the sphere of economy, ideology, science and culture is being improved. On the basis of long-term programmes, economic integration is deepening. Life itself has confronted the fraternal countries with the task of supplementing coordination of plans by concerting economic policy as a whole.

*The CPSU consistently supports strengthening the solidarity of the socialist community with all contingents of the international communist, working-class and national liberation movement.* The 26th Party Congress stressed that a powerful factor for the further unity and growth of authority of the world communist movement is the consistent struggle of Communists for peace, against the aggressive policy of imperialism and the arms race imposed by it, which confronts the peoples with the threat of a nuclear holocaust. Armed with the teaching of Marxism-Leninism, Communists are fighting tirelessly for the interests of the working class, the working people of their countries, for democracy, peace and socialism.

The cooperation of the USSR with the national liberation move-

ment of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and with the newly-liberated states, fighting against imperialism and for the consolidation of their national independence and social progress, is developing. The Soviet Union is resolutely in favour of the elimination of the vestiges of colonialism and against neo-colonialism and racism, economic and political diktat and inequality. It consistently supports the anti-imperialist traditions of the non-alignment movement and gives practical assistance to the struggle of the developing states for the restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic basis. The young states, first and foremost those who have chosen a socialist orientation, show a lively interest in the Soviet experience of national-state construction and the transition of a number of peoples of the USSR to socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage of development.

Today hundreds of millions of people in various countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America are advancing, together with the peoples of the USSR, along the path paved by the Great October Revolution. There is not and cannot be any path to socialism that ignores the general laws revealed by Marxism-Leninism and confirmed by the experience of the USSR, the other socialist countries, and the international practice of the revolutionary struggle and socialist construction, just as there cannot be any successful progress along this path without full consideration of the national features of each country.

*At a time of the aggravation of the international situation, caused by the policy of imperialism, first and foremost American imperialism, the active implementation of Lenin's peace strategy supported by our Party and state is of prime importance for the fate of mankind. The Peace Programme for the eighties, advanced by the 26th CPSU Congress and supplemented by the new initiatives of Leonid Brezhnev, points to realistic, constructive ways of reducing the threat of war, deepening détente and developing broad cooperation between states with different systems. It opens up opportunities for solving complex international problems not by confrontation, but on the basis of honest, equal negotiation.*

The policy of the Soviet state is an effective counterweight to the striving of aggressive imperialist circles to impose a new round of the arms race on the world, to constantly increase world tension, and to undermine the basis of mutually profitable international relations. It is a profoundly humane policy of an open, democratic nature, that is in keeping with the interests of the peoples of the USSR, the fraternal socialist countries, and the entire peace-loving mankind. This guarantees it the support of the broadest circles of the international public, and of all people of good will.

The peace policy of the USSR and the other countries of the socialist community is at the same time a policy of firmly rebuffing the aggressive strivings of imperialism, which are compounded by the anti-Soviet policy of the present Peking leadership, and any violation of the security of the USSR and its allies. The socialist community possesses all that is necessary to protect its historic, revolutionary gains.

The Soviet Union does not seek to impose upon anyone any set types or "models" of a state structure that ignore the special features of the country. It exerts a growing influence on the course of history by the very fact of its existence, the real practice of a new type of social, inter-national relations, the power of its example in solving complex problems with which capitalism is unable to cope. The USSR, a mighty socialist state, is constructing its own relations with other countries on the noble, to quote Lenin, humane principle of equality and not on the principle of privileges which is degrading for a great people.

*As they celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the USSR, the Soviet people are rightly proud of their achievements, of the revolutionary, historic mission which is being honorably performed by our Homeland, marching at the forefront of those who fight for peace, independence, freedom and happiness of the peoples.* The decisions of the 26th CPSU Congress are inspiring the working people of all the nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union to new feats of labour in the name of the triumph of communism.

An important step in the further development of all the republics and in the creation of the material and technical base of communism is the Eleventh Five-Year Plan. It also heralds an important stage in the implementation of Lenin's national policy and the consolidation of the friendship and brotherhood of the peoples of the USSR.

The Party's course aimed at intensification of social production and an all-round increase in its efficiency requires a high degree of organisation, business-like approach and discipline, the precise and smooth functioning of the system of management, and the development of the creative initiative of the masses.

The tasks advanced by the Party for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan period and the eighties as a whole are in keeping with the vital interests of the Soviet people. And they are striving hard to fulfil them. In the present socialist emulation on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the USSR, the working people of all the republics, territories and regions are setting splendid examples of excellent work, doing all they can for the successful implementation of the 1982 plan.

Confident of their powers and full of optimism, the Soviet people advance along the road charted by the party of Lenin. There can be no doubt that the tasks of communist construction, defined by the 26th CPSU Congress, will be carried out successfully. A guarantee of this is the indestructible unity of the peoples of the USSR and their harmonious joint work in the name of this great goal.

*Pravda*, 21 February 1982

CHRONICLE  
OF LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS  
CONTAINED IN THE PRESENT COLLECTION

1917

- 8 November Appeal of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets  
"To Workers, Soldiers and Peasants!"
- 8 November Decree On Peace of the Second All-Russia Congress  
of Soviets
- 8 November Resolution of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets  
"On the Formation of a Worker and Peasant Govern-  
ment"
- 8 November Address of the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets  
"On the Transfer of Power to the Soviets"
- 15 November Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia. Adopted  
by the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR
- 3 December Address "To All Worker Moslems of Russia and the  
East". Adopted by the Council of People's Commissars  
of the RSFSR
- 12 December Resolution of the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets  
"On Organising Soviet Power in the Ukraine"
- 12 December Resolution of the First All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets  
"On Self-Determination of the Ukraine"
- 17 December Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the  
RSFSR "On Recognition by the Council of People's  
Commissars of the People's Ukrainian Republic and on  
an Ultimatum to the Central Rada in View of Its Coun-  
ter-revolutionary Activity"
- 25 December Manifesto of the Central Executive Committee of So-  
viets of the Ukraine "To All Workers, Peasants and Sol-  
diers of the Ukraine"

1918

- 25 January Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited  
People. Adopted by the Third All-Russia Congress of  
Soviets

- 28 January Resolution of the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets "On Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic"
- 28 January Resolution of the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets "On the Policy of the Council of People's Commissars on the National Question"
- 10 July Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. Approved by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets
- 29 November Manifesto of the Government of the Estland Labour Commune
- 7 December Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR "On Recognising the Independence of the Estland Soviet Republic"
- 16 December Decree of the Government of the Estland Labour Commune "On the Full Powers of the Soviet of the Estland Labour Commune"
- 16 December Manifesto of the Provisional Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government of Lithuania "On Establishing Soviet Power in Lithuania"
- 17 December Manifesto of the Soviet Government of Workers, Landless Peasants and Riflemen of Latvia "On Establishing Soviet Power in Latvia"
- 22 December Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR "On Recognising the Independence of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic"
- 22 December Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR "On Recognising the Independence of the Soviet Republic of Latvia"
- 25 December Resolution of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee "On Recognising the Soviet Republics of Estland, Lithuania and Latvia"

### 1919

- 1 January Manifesto of the Provisional Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Soviet Government of Byelorussia on the Occasion of the Formation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
- 26 January Declaration of the Provisional Worker-Peasant Government of the Ukraine
- 2 February Declaration of the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets "On Establishing a Close Federative Union between Soviet Byelorussia and the RSFSR"

- 2 February Declaration of the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets "On Uniting the Soviet Socialist Republics of Lithuania and Byelorussia"
- 3 February Constitution of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Approved by the First All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets
- 4 February Resolution of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee "On Recognising the Independence of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 18-20 February Resolution of the First Congress of Soviets of Workers', Landless and Land-Starved Peasants' and Red Army Deputies of Lithuania "On the Unification of Lithuania and Byelorussia"
- 10 March Constitution of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic. Approved by the Third All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets
- 18 May Resolution of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee "On Joining the Military Forces of the Soviet Republics"
- 1 June Decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee "On the Military Union of the Soviet Republics: Russia, the Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Byelorussia for the Struggle against World Imperialism"
- 5 December Resolution of the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets "On Oppressed Nations"

1920

- 28 April Address of the Military-Revolutionary Committee of the Azerbaijan Soviet Independent Republic to Soviet Russia
- 29 April Address of the Azerbaijan Revolutionary Committee to the Population of Azerbaijan with an Appeal to Conclude a Fraternal Union with Soviet Russia and Provide Red Army Help
- 30 April Constitution of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic. Approved by the First All-Khorezm Kurultai of People's Representatives
- 20 May Resolution of the Fourth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets "On Inter-State Relations between the UkSSR and the RSFSR"
- 13 September Union Treaty between the RSFSR and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic

- 13 September Economic Agreement between the RSFSR and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic
- 22 September Address of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to the Karelian People on the Occasion of the Formation of the Karelian Labour Commune
- 30 September Treaty between the RSFSR and the Azerbaijan SSR on Military and Economic Union
- 30 September Agreement of the RSFSR with the Government of the Azerbaijan SSR "On a Common Economic Policy"
- 30 September Agreement between the Government of the RSFSR and the Government of the Azerbaijan SSR "On Matters of Foreign Trade"
- 30 September Agreement of the Government of the RSFSR with the Government of the Azerbaijan SSR "On the Merger of Administration of Postal, Telegraph, Telephone and Radiotelegraph Services"
- 8 October Resolution of the First All-Bukhara Kurultai of People's Representatives "On Proclaiming Bukhara a People's Soviet Republic"
- 29 November Declaration of the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia "On Proclaiming Armenia a Socialist Soviet Republic"
- 30 November Address of the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia "On Proclaiming Armenia a Socialist Soviet Republic".
- 2 December Agreement between the RSFSR and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia "On Recognising the Independence of Armenia, Concluded in Erivan"
- 28 December Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union between the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic

*1921*

- 16 January Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union between the RSFSR and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia
- 18 February Proclamation of the Revolutionary Committee of Georgia "On Overthrowing the Counter-Revolutionary Menshevik Government"
- 4 March Treaty of Union between the RSFSR and the Bukhara Soviet Republic
- 4 March Economic Agreement between the RSFSR and the Bukhara Soviet Republic

- 16 April Agreement on the Administration of the Railways of Transcaucasia
- 19 May Constitution of the Azerbaijan Socialist Soviet Republic. Approved by the First Congress of Soviets of the Azerbaijan SSR
- 21 May Workers' and Peasants' Treaty of Union between the RSFSR and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia
- 21 May Agreement between the RSFSR and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia on Financial Matters
- 26 July Agreement between the Governments of the RSFSR and the Byelorussian SSR on Financial Matters
- 23 September Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic. Adopted by the Second All-Bukhara Kurultai of People's Representatives
- 30 September Agreement between the Governments of the RSFSR and the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia on Financial Matters

#### 1922

- 4 February Constitution of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia
- 22 February On the Delegation of the Powers of Representation of the Soviet Republics at the All-European Economic Conference to the RSFSR (Agreement)
- 2 March Constitution of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Georgia
- 12 March Allied Treaty "On Forming the Federal Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia"
- 24 May Agreement between the RSFSR, on the One Hand, and the Azerbaijan SSR, the Armenian SSR and the Georgian SSR, on the Other, On the Merger of Administration of Postal, Telegraph, Telephone and Radiotelegraph Services
- 16 October Resolution of the Third Session of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee (Sixth Convocation) "On Relations between the Soviet Republics"
- 3 December Resolution of the Second Congress of Soviets of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia on the Report on the Transcaucasian Federation and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- 9 December Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Azerbaijan SSR (Second Convocation) "In Support of the Entry of the Transcaucasian Federation into the Union of Soviet Republics"

- 13 December Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic
- 13 December Declaration of the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets "On the Formation of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics"
- 13 December Resolution of the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets "On the Report on the Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics"
- 13 December Resolution of the First Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets "On Calling the General Congress of Soviets of the Socialist Soviet Republics"
- 14 December Resolution of the Seventh All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets "On the All-Union Congress and Election of Delegates to It"
- 14 December Appeal of the Fourth All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets "To the Working People of Byelorussia"
- 18 December Resolution of the Fourth All-Byelorussia Congress of Soviets "On the Formation of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics"
- 27 December Resolution of the Tenth All-Russia Congress of Soviets "On the Report on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 30 December Resolution of the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR "On Approving the Declaration and Treaty on the Formation of the USSR"
- 30 December Declaration of the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR "On the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 30 December Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Approved by the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR

1923

- 2 July Resolution of the Third Session of the All-Ukraine Central Executive Committee (Seventh Convocation) "On the Draft Constitution of the USSR"
- 6 July Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (First Convocation) "On the Composition of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"

- 6 July Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (First Convocation) "On Putting into Force the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 13 July Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR "On the Appeal of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR to All the Peoples and Governments of the World"
- 13 July Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR "On Informing All Central Executive Committees of the Union Republics of the Functioning of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR"
- 20 October Constitution of the Khorezm Soviet Socialist Republic

1924

- 3 January Resolution of the Second All-Georgia Congress of Soviets "On the Report on the Constitution of the USSR"
- 5 January Resolution of the Second Transcaucasian Congress of Soviets "On the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR"
- 29 January Resolution of the Eleventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets "On the Adoption of the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the USSR"
- 31 January Resolution of the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR "On the Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the USSR"
- 31 January Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Approved by the Second Congress of Soviets of the USSR
- 19 September Resolution of the Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai of Soviets "On the Transformation of the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic into the Bukhara Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 20 September Resolution of the Fifth All-Bukhara Kurultai of Soviets "On National Republics and National Demarcation"
- 30 September Resolution of the Fifth All-Khorezm Kurultai of Soviets "On National State Demarcation"
- 14 October Resolution of the Second Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (Eleventh Convocation) "On the Reorganisation of the Autonomous Turkestan

Socialist Soviet Republic into Separate Autonomous Units”

- 27 October Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR (Second Convocation) “On the Demarcation of the Soviet Republics in Central Asia and on the Entry into the USSR of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic and the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic”

1925

- 17 February Declaration of the First All-Uzbek Congress of Soviets “On the Formation of the Uzbek Union Soviet Socialist Republic”
- 20 February Resolution of the First All-Turkmen Congress of Soviets “On the Adoption of the Declaration, Drafting of the Constitution and Formation of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars of the Turkmen SSR”
- 20 February Declaration of the First All-Turkmen Congress of Soviets “On the Formation of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic”
- 20 February Resolution of the First All-Turkmen Congress of Soviets “On the Entry into the Union of Socialist Republics”
- 14 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic
- 10 May Resolution of the Ninth All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets “On the Entry of the Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan SSR into the USSR”
- 11 May Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic
- 11 May Resolution of the Twelfth All-Russia Congress of Soviets “On Approval of the Division of the Turkestan Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic”
- 13 May Resolution of the Third Congress of Soviets of the USSR “On the Entry into the USSR of the Turkmen and Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republics”
- 20 May Resolution of the Third Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics “On Amendment of the Constitution of the USSR in Connection with the Entry into the USSR of the Turkmen and Uzbek Union Socialist Soviet Republics”

1927

- 30 March Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Turkmen Socialist Soviet Republic
- 11 April Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic

1929

- 15 May Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic
- 12 June Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR "Communique of the Government of the Tajik ASSR"
- 13 July Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Uzbek SSR "Resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on the Transformation of the Tajik ASSR into a Union Republic Forming Part of the USSR"
- 11 September Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets (Second Convocation) of the Tajik ASSR "On the Separation of the Tajik ASSR from the Uzbek SSR and Its Entry into the USSR"
- 16 October Declaration of the Extraordinary Third All-Tajik Congress of Soviets "On the Transformation of the Tajik ASSR into the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic and Its Inclusion in the USSR"
- 16 October Resolution of the Extraordinary Third All-Tajik Congress of Soviets "On the Formation of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 16 October Declaration of the Extraordinary Third All-Tajik Congress of Soviets "On the Formation of the Tajik Socialist Soviet Republic"
- 7 November Resolution of the Extraordinary Third Session of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets of the Uzbek SSR "On the Separation of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic from the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 5 December Resolution of the Second Session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR (Fifth Convocation) "On the Entry of the Tajik Union Republic into the USSR"

1931

- 28 February Fundamental Law (Constitution) of the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic
- 17 March Resolution of the Sixth Congress of Soviets of the USSR "On the Report on Constitutional Matters"

1936

- 5 December Resolution of the Extraordinary Eighth Congress of Soviets of the USSR "On the Approval of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR"
- 5 December Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Congress of Soviets of the USSR

1937

- 21 January Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 17th All-Russia Congress of Soviets
- 30 January Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 14th Ukrainian Congress of Soviets
- 13 February Resolution of the Extraordinary Eighth All-Georgia Congress of Soviets "On the Dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic"
- 13 February Constitution (Fundamental Law) on the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th All-Georgia Congress of Soviets
- 14 February Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Uzbek SSR
- 19 February Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 12th Congress of Soviets of the Byelorussian SSR
- 1 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Tajik SSR
- 2 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Congress of Soviets of the Turkmen SSR

- 14 March Resolution of the Extraordinary Ninth All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets "On the Dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic"
- 14 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th All-Azerbaijan Congress of Soviets
- 23 March Resolution of the Extraordinary Ninth Congress of Soviets of Armenia "On the Dissolution of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic"
- 23 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 5th Congress of Soviets of the Kirghiz SSR
- 23 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Congress of Soviets of the Armenian SSR
- 26 March Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 10th All-Kazakhstan Congress of Soviets

1939

- 27 October Declaration of the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine "On State Power in the Western Ukraine"
- 27 October Declaration of the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine "On the Western Ukraine's Accession to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 29 October Declaration of the People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia "On State Power"
- 29 October Declaration of the People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia "On Western Byelorussia's Accession to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 1 November Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Admission of the Western Ukraine to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Re-uniting It with the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 2 November Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Admission of Western Byelorussia to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Re-uniting It with the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 14 November Law of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic "On the Admission of Western Byelorussia to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic"

15 November Law of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic "On the Admission of the Western Ukraine to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic"

1940

- 31 March Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Transformation of the Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic into a Union Republic—the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 21 July Declaration of the Lithuanian Sejm "On State Power in Lithuania"
- 21 July Declaration of the Lithuanian Sejm "On the Accession of Lithuania to the USSR"
- 21 July Declaration of the Latvian Sejm "On State Power in Latvia"
- 21 July Declaration of the Latvian Sejm "On the Accession of Latvia to the USSR"
- 21 July Declaration of the State Duma of Estonia "On State Power in Estonia"
- 22 July Declaration of the State Duma of Estonia "On the Accession of Estonia to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 2 August Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Inclusion of the Northern Part of Bukovina and the Khotin, Akkerman and Izmail Uyezds of Bessarabia in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic"
- 2 August Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Formation of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic as a Union Republic"
- 3 August Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Admission of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 5 August Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Admission of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 6 August Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Admission of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 25 August Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary Session of the Popular Sejm of the Lithuanian SSR

25 August Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary Second Session of the Popular Sejm of the Latvian SSR

25 August Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the State Duma of the Estonian SSR

*1941*

12 February Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR

*1944*

11 October Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Admission of the Tuva People's Republic to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"

*1946*

2 February Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Formation of the South Sakhalin Region within the Khabarovsk Territory of the RSFSR"

7 April Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Formation of the Königsberg Region within the RSFSR"

*1956*

16 July Law of the USSR "On the Reorganisation of the Karelo-Finnish SSR into the Karelian ASSR and Its Inclusion in the RSFSR"

*1961*

10 October Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Transformation of the Tuva Autonomous Region into the Tuva Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic"

1977

- 27 May Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Draft Constitution of the USSR"
- 27 May National Anthem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Approved by a Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
- 30 September Resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Draft Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 7 October Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Adoption and Announcement of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics"
- 7 October Law of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "On the Declaration of the Day of Adoption of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR a Public Holiday"
- 7 October Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (9th Convocation)

1978

- 12 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (9th Convocation)
- 13 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen SSR (9th Convocation)
- 13 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 14 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 14 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th

- Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Tajik SSR (9th Convocation)
- 14 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 15 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 15 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 18 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Latvian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 19 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 6th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR (9th Convocation)
- 20 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 20 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR (9th Convocation)
- 20 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 9th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian SSR (9th Convocation)
- 20 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 8th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kirghiz SSR (9th Convocation)
- 21 April Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. Adopted by the Extraordinary 7th Session of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR (9th Convocation)

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- 31 March Regulations on the State Emblem of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Approved by a Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
- 15 August Regulations on the State Flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Approved by a Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR

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- 21 February Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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**“... solemnly proclaiming  
the immutability of the  
foundations of Soviet power,  
as expressed in the Constitutions  
of the Socialist Soviet Republics,  
which have empowered us, we,  
the delegates of these republics,  
exercising the powers given to  
us, do hereby resolve to sign  
the Treaty establishing the ‘Union  
of Soviet Socialist Republics’.”**

**“Being as it is a natural ally  
of oppressed peoples,  
the Union of Soviet Socialist  
Republics is seeking peaceful  
and friendly relations and  
economic cooperation with all  
peoples.”**