

Letter from Walter Ulbricht to Gustav Heinemann (17 December 1969)

Caption: On 17 December 1969, Walter Ulbricht, Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), sends a letter to Gustav Heinemann, President of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), proposing the establishment of equal diplomatic relations between the two neighbouring States.

Source: United States-Department of State. Documents on Germany 1944-1985. Washington: Department of State, [s.d.]. 1421 p. (Department of State Publication 9446). p. 1055-1056.

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Very honored Mr. Federal President:

I address you motivated by the will to contribute to the securing of peace in Europe and to make possible the establishment of equal relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany in conformity with the principles of peaceful coexistence.

Living next to each other peacefully and forming a good-neighborliness between the two German states require that their relations be established on the basis of the generally recognized norms of valid international law. That can be only of advantage for the relaxation of tensions in the heart of Europe, for which the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany bear an especially high responsibility to their own citizens and to the people of Europe.

Therefore, I take the liberty of transmitting to you a "Treaty Concerning the Establishment of Equal Relations Between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany," which has been approved as a draft by the State Council of the German Democratic Republic.

I have empowered for the conduct of the negotiations and for signing of the treaty the chairman of the ministerial council of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Willi Stoph, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Otto Winzer.

Recognizing the significance of a peaceful juxtaposition of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, I propose that the negotiations be begun if possible in January, 1970.

I voice the expectation that you, Mr. Federal President, and I will do what we can to see that the establishment of equal international relations between both German states be reached in businesslike negotiations.

With great respect.