Overall impact on Détente
Increasing/obvious economic imbalance emphasising decline East – détente more desirable to East
- Slowed arms race – struggling USSR economy could no longer afford
- Facilitated trading with West – access to cheap Western goods
Made détente increasing less desirable to West
- Critics began to voice concerns from political right
- US vulnerable – OPEC crisis had highlighted this, US doing little to safeguard position
- Demands for safeguarding of oil reserves – placing US attention on Middle East, concerns of possible Soviet action in the region
Mid 1970s – issues starting to undermine ‘spirit of Détente’

Helsinki Accords (1975)
Another major détente landmark – set out comprehensive framework governing relations between East/West, 33 countries involved
Warsaw Pact countries wanted US recognition of European borders established after WWII
Basket 1 – Security issues
- European countries – not interfere in each other’s international affairs, respect borders
Basket 2 – Economic, cultural, scientific and environmental issues
- Cooperate on matters of mutual interest, foster good trading relations across Europe
- Agreed to share Western technology with East
Basket 3 – Human rights
- Pledged to respect human rights of citizens/relax trade restrictions across Europe

Unexpected problems, exposed by Helsinki
Basket 2
- Exposed inferiority of communist economies
- Led Eastern Bloc citizens to question efficiency of communist economy/legitimacy of communist rule – Ideological subversion
Basket 3
- Exposed Eastern Bloc to Western culture – repressive/undemocratic nature of communist rule began to be questioned
- Sakharov (Soviet human rights activist) – founded ‘Moscow Helsinki Group’ to monitor/publicise human rights abuses
US used Basket 3 to criticise USSR for not keeping terms
Became focus of serious disagreement/confrontation as ‘spirit of détente’ went into decline