

The "maximalist" group, consisting of Canada, Germany, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Ireland and Italy, while fully agreeing with the CSBM role, continued to advocate a broader vocation for the CPC, one that would enable it to assist the Council of Ministers more directly in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Over the long term, this meant a military *and* a political CPC, in close interaction with the CSO and the Council.

Canada feared that restricting the CPC to a military focus would leave the CSCE without the ability to deal effectively with future European conflicts, most of which would probably arise over non-military issues. Moreover, a CPC with a broad political mandate, including dispute settlement, would help to reassure Central and East European states that they would not be abandoned by the CSCE if their security were jeopardized. It might also counteract the growing feeling of isolation in Moscow and make the continued existence of NATO easier to bear. Language in the Paris Charter indicating that the CPC was "to assist the Council in reducing the risk of conflict," and could assume other functions assigned to it in future, provided reference points for Canada returning to the charge, particularly at Senior Official and Council meetings.

At the first CSO meeting in Vienna on January 28-29, 1991, Canada circulated a working paper on the CPC's evolution and development.<sup>16</sup> In the area of arms control, Canada proposed that the Centre could facilitate information exchange and data management for CSBMs, CFE and Open Skies (once negotiated), and could support national verification efforts. In the broader area of cooperative security, Canada argued that the CPC should be able to assume diverse conflict prevention functions at the direction of the Council. As an early test of what the system might bear, Canada was concentrating on two initiatives. The first was advocating broader use of the CPC communications system. In line with establishing a cooperative security focus for the Centre (i.e. enabling it to deal with any conflict, no matter what the source), Canada proposed that the system could be used to facilitate the exchange of information between participating states for the human dimension mechanism,<sup>17</sup> and could be linked to the CSCE Secretariat and to the Office for Free Elections to help those bodies fulfil their mandates.

The second initiative was to tie the CSCE's newly-established peaceful settlement of disputes mechanism to the CPC. Dispute settlement mechanisms had an undistinguished record in the CSCE. Experts meetings had been held in 1978 and 1984 to attempt to elaborate a system that would involve a series of stages from inquiry, mediation and conciliation through to arbitration. Both meetings ended without substantive result, largely because of USSR opposition to mandatory measures. At the Vienna FUM, the USSR accepted the principle of compulsory recourse to a third party, making possible a third meeting on dispute settlement, held in Valletta from January 15 to February 8, 1991. In light of the expectations generated by the Paris Summit, it was considered important that participants eschew academic discourse in favour of practical results.

Canada submitted to the Valletta meeting a working paper entitled "Dispute

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<sup>16</sup>Included in Annex.

<sup>17</sup>Described below.