



Again, how should we get down to concrete work? We should quickly structure this Conference in such a way that we can focus on these areas of congruence. We must get on with our task of giving effect and expression to our duty to refrain from the threat or use of force in our mutual relations.

Mr. Chairman, mutual confidence is built on predictability. It cannot be created by waving a magic wand. It cannot be declared. It has to be built. This is the only way to persuade each other that our respective military forces

are there for the legitimate protection of our national security and the maintenance of peace and that they do not threaten anyone's sovereignty. It will only be when such conditions of mutual confidence are achieved by concrete effort that stability in European politics can become a reality. It is only then that conditions for reducing forces can become a viable proposal leading to a process of improvement in relations between States which could go beyond this Conference and evolve into meaningful agreements. I believe these are the essential expectations of the people of all our countries."

The essence of the first approach to confidence-building is the communication of information in order to clarify intentions through more openness in military affairs. The second approach amounts to declarations of benevolent intent.

There is nothing new in this. The two approaches long pre-date the current period of difficult East-West relations.

During the negotiation of the Final Act, at a time, a decade ago, of more relaxed East-West relations, the notion of transparency in military affairs was often decried as espionage — decried in such bitter terms that the negotiations seemed to be on the verge of collapse. But there was no attempt then, nor is there any now, to force the word 'transparency' down anyone's throat.

We use the word now as we did then to describe an antidote to secrecy and secretiveness. In our context here, secrecy and confidence are incompatible, and secretiveness for its own sake and as a habit of mind is the arch-enemy of those who seek to create more stable relationships among us.

But it is the concept, not the word, that matters. As our French colleague said the other day, we are not obliging those who do not like it to inscribe the word 'transparency' in our concluding document. Let us, to use the expression wisely chosen by the Ambassador of Belgium, 'demystify', let us demystify this notion once and for all. What we mean by transparency is that military information — which is already available through the press in some countries and by other means — should become the subject of regular and cooperative exchanges between and among governments.

If we can be clear about this notion and its desirability, and its usefulness in terms of confidence-building, we can use another word to describe it. For instance, we could talk about 'openness'.

Whatever word we use, we agreed upon the idea in negotiating the Final Act. The Final Act prescribes that 'clear

Statement of September 27, 1984, on Openness and the Conference Mandate

"We seem to be having a problem getting going. Our work is proving to be at least as difficult as some had feared it might be — and in light of our discussions so far, I suspect that this would have been the case even if the international situation were more relaxed than it is, in fact, today.

We are dealing with competing approaches to confidence-building. They reflect profound differences in ideology and in military doctrine. But, both approaches aim at reducing the chances of war breaking out in Europe.

This is the essential point of common interest. It is surely the ringing message of our mandate. It comes through strong and clear. No one here has questioned it.

Why then do some Delegations seem prepared to pick away at other aspects of the mandate? Such attempts threaten to unravel the whole fabric by quarrelling with specific provisions of it.

The two competing approaches to confidence-building are clearly demonstrated in the proposals before us. What I would judge to be a majority of participating States opt for measures which, in effect, would communicate, between and among members,

credible evidence of the absence of feared threats. While such measures would, in certain respects, only publicly express what is already known through other information sources, they have a profound political and psychological importance because they can be implemented only at the express wish and with the determination of the States involved. These measures, when accepted, would carry with them a political commitment of intent that would make it easier to recognize normal patterns of military activity, thus enabling States to discern significant deviations which could indicate possible threats.

A minority of our negotiating partners seems to favour a less specific, a less concrete approach to confidence-building. They see it as a wide process — a process which, in being essentially declaratory, is much more difficult to quantify, to measure and actually see. In this scheme of things, we would know that a solemn undertaking had been broken only when it had been broken — which is, of course, tragically too late.

We note, however, that all of the participating States recognize the importance of political will. What differs are our views on how to apply it.