

of action was being decided.

In looking at the possibility of institutionalizing a genuine conflict prevention and resolution function within the CSCE, Canadian officials -- while optimistic, in proposing such features as easily-triggered panels, amendment of the consensus rule, and the possibility of peacekeeping -- tried to guard against being too naive or too CSCE-centred. They recognized that saddling the CSCE with unrealistic mandates could doom the process to irrelevance as much as failing to amend it would. The CSCE was not the panacea for Europe's ills. The management of conflict and the peaceful resolution of disputes in Europe could, and hopefully would, take many forms, involving the EC, NATO, the UN, great power diplomacy and bilateral problem-solving. Canada hoped, however, that the CSCE could complement such processes and grow over time to become a central forum for European conflict management.

Preparing for Paris

Canada recognized that it did not have the definitive blueprint for the CSCE's development. Neither, however, did anyone else. Canada wanted to get its ideas into the debate early on, so that they could help shape that debate's evolution. Already a "critical path" was taking shape, in the form of the CSCE Summit to be held in Paris from November 19 to 21, followed by the Helsinki Follow-Up Meeting (FUM) to begin in March 1992. Each of these was expected to make a major contribution to retooling Europe's security arrangements.

A CSCE summit had first been proposed by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in late 1989, as a means of enabling participating states to jointly assess the political changes in Central and Eastern Europe and to set guidelines for future developments. Gorbachev's proposal was endorsed by NATO and Warsaw Pact foreign ministers at the Open Skies conference in Ottawa on February 13, 1990, and by neutral and non-aligned foreign ministers at a meeting in Valletta (Malta) on March 3.

The Paris summit would be the first CSCE meeting to be attended by heads of state or government since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act. CSCE restructuring was expected to be at the top of the agenda. Canada's proposal joined a host of others for institutionalizing the CSCE and beefing up its conflict prevention and management capacity. In a speech to the European Parliament on December 20, 1989, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze called for regular CSCE meetings, including at the head of government level, an ongoing CSCE forum, and permanent structures, including a centre for reducing the risk of war, a centre for emergency ecological assistance and a European human rights institute.⁶ German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher -- a devoted CSCE advocate -- raised in a New Year's address and subsequently elaborated proposals for biennial summit meetings, annual foreign ministers meetings, a migrant secretariat (to work in the capital of the host country of the next summit) that could also assume some crisis control functions, as well as an ongoing economic conference and a

⁶The USSR had previously brought forward all three projects in the CSCE at one time or another, and the risk reduction centre had been discussed in the CSBM negotiations in Vienna.