

Since the beginning of the CSCE, Canada has been a leading advocate of measures to facilitate «East-West» family contacts, family reunification, marriage between persons of different nationality, and personal contacts generally. Canada has taken a priority interest in this given the large share of the Canadian population which has family roots in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Moreover, it is evident that real security and cooperation in Europe will be achieved only when there is mutual confidence, and that the best route to its achievement is a substantial increase of human contacts. In recent years there has been a considerable growth in official, commercial and tourist travel between Western and Eastern Europe but, disappointingly, some countries still maintain highly restrictive controls on travel and emigration by their citizens.

Canadians are used to coming and going as they please--a traditional right guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms--and tend to forget the deep frustrations felt by many people in countries where these freedoms are not respected. The objectives of Canada at the forthcoming meeting in Berne will be to identify the obstacles still put in the way of East-West human contacts, and to encourage governments to adopt a more flexible stance towards family travel and family reunification in the country of a family's choice.