

Forum for Security Cooperation Considers New Measures for Europe

The CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC) was established in Vienna in September 1992 pursuant to a decision reached at the CSCE Helsinki Summit in July 1992. The FSC was designed to build upon such achievements as CFE, the Vienna Document 1992 on confidence- and security-building measures, and the Open Skies Treaty. Work in the FSC is guided by a Program of Immediate Action covering 12 priority areas for new arms control and confidence-building measures. These are designed to maintain the momentum of enhancing arms control, disarmament, confidence- and security-building, security cooperation and conflict prevention in Europe. Unlike the negotiations that produced CFE and Open Skies, participation in the FSC is open to all CSCE participating states.

It is envisaged that work on the Program of Immediate Action will be completed in time for the CSCE Review Conference that begins in Budapest in October 1994. However, spurred by the desire to show progress to the Rome Council, negotiators completed work in the following four areas prior to the Ministers' meeting:

- stabilizing measures for localized crisis situations (to assist the CSCE in preventing areas of tension from escalating to armed conflict);
- principles governing conventional arms transfers (to encourage more responsible approaches to arms transfers);
- defence planning (to increase transparency about long-term planning for military policies and forces); and
- military contacts and cooperation (to facilitate further contacts and information exchanges between military forces).

In the coming months, the FSC will be challenged to conclude work on the more difficult issues under consideration in the framework of the Program of Immediate Action. One of these is a code of conduct governing relations between states. However, given the indivisibility of security within the CSCE, work at the conceptual stage reveals a strong interest on the part of many states in developing rules to standardize behaviour of national governments towards their own nationals, in particular those belonging to national minorities. Preliminary discussions indicate that it will be difficult to develop precise language that results in meaningful rules.

CSCE Structure

The Rome Meeting took decisions on the future structure and decision-making processes of the CSCE itself, guided by the principle that the institutional structure of the CSCE should remain modest, effective and responsive to the goals of the CSCE. To this end, Ministers established the "Permanent Committee" of the CSCE in Vienna, replacing the "Vienna Group." It will have enhanced decision-making authority and will be responsible for day-to-day operational tasks of the CSCE, including dispatching conflict management missions. The Council also endorsed the decision of the Committee of Senior Officials to establish a single CSCE Secretariat in Vienna, replacing the existing separate Secretariat and offices. The Secretariat in Prague will now function as a sub-office to the CSCE Secretariat. Finally, the Consultative Committee of the Conflict

Prevention Centre was dissolved and its functions allocated to the new Permanent Committee and the existing Forum for Security Cooperation, also in Vienna. These decisions should result in a more effective, action-oriented CSCE.

Economic Cooperation

The Rome Council reaffirmed the CSCE's role in contributing to sustainable economic development. Following the successful first Economic Forum held in March 1993, a second Economic Forum will be held in Prague in March 1994 and the Secretariat has been tasked with providing support to activities in the economic dimension. Canada has been a strong proponent of a continuing role for the CSCE in economic cooperation, as a forum for discussion that can complement the work going on in specialized bodies and as an essential element in the CSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

Looking Ahead

For Canada, the Rome Council meeting provided an excellent opportunity for Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet to underline the new government's commitment to European security and to the CSCE in particular. This reaffirmation, plus the Minister's own interest in the CSCE, was well received. Canada, which has played a major role in re-positioning the CSCE as a cooperative security organization focused on conflict management and the root sources of tensions, will continue to remain active in all aspects of CSCE work.

The next key event on the CSCE agenda is the Budapest Review Conference and Summit, to be held October-December 1994. Between now and then, CSCE states will focus on implementing the decisions taken by the Rome Council and on preparing the work program for Budapest.

The way ahead seems fairly clear, if not easy. The CSCE's institutional development is more or less complete; what is now required is fine-tuning to ensure the various institutions function in a coordinated and effective manner. The CSCE needs to continue to address its capacity to manage conflicts; for example, its response to proposed cooperation with "third party" peacekeepers will need to be clarified well before Budapest. The military-security negotiations under the aegis of the FSC will need to proceed smoothly if Heads of Government in Budapest are to approve further agreements under the Program of Immediate Action. Considerable effort will also be needed to ensure that the human dimension is effectively integrated into the mainstream of the CSCE's political and security work.

As evidenced by the Rome Council meeting, the CSCE will continue to face serious problems in its efforts to promote cooperative security in Europe: problems arising from conflicts in the CSCE area, from the difficult process of political and economic transition still underway, and in the CSCE's relationships to other regional organizations. In Canada's view, however, the CSCE has the framework of principles and commitments, institutions and operational instruments necessary to address effectively future challenges in Europe. The last obstacle to the CSCE's effectiveness is one that rests with each CSCE state: political will.