



communiqué

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CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced today that Canada has introduced a proposal at the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe aimed at enhancing the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of national minorities and regional cultures.

In introducing the proposal, Ambassador William Bauer told representatives of the 35-nation conference (all European states except Albania, and Canada and the United States), that "as the history of 20th century Europe tragically has illustrated, when the rights and fundamental freedoms of members of national minorities are disregarded or degraded, the human cost is enormous."

The Canadian proposal was co-sponsored by the delegations of Belgium - on behalf of the European Community - the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States. It is based upon proposals submitted earlier at the Ottawa Meeting of Experts on Human Rights, and at the Budapest Cultural Forum.

The proposal aims to build on already agreed commitments set out in the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid Concluding Document, the two major accords which comprise the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The proposal would require the participating states to take all the necessary legislative, administrative and judicial steps to ensure the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons belonging to national minorities within their territory.

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