

prosperous and humane Europe is a cornerstone of a safe, prosperous and humane Canada. We will therefore both at this meeting, in Stockholm, in Budapest later this year, and in Berne and Vienne in 1986, to expand our dialogue and cooperation.

It is, I know, a widely shared perception that the Ottawa meeting could be a difficult one. In proposing and pursuing with others at Madrid the idea of holding a meeting on human rights, Canada was conscious both of the sensitivity of the subject and of some of the reservations and concerns held by our CSCE partners.

But issues of central importance such as human rights cannot and must not be avoided just because they are sensitive and can sometimes give rise to disagreement between governments. Both the Helsinki Final Act and the Madrid Concluding Document point out that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential factor in the search for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and cooperation among us. The same recognition is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. These assertions reflect the fact that a world that is not increasingly humane is unlikely to be increasingly safe, or even, in the long run, more prosperous. This is why human rights are, and will stay, on the international agenda. It is why you are gathered here today to dedicate six weeks to discussing human rights in our states, something that would have been unimaginable twenty or perhaps even ten years ago.

Intellectually, we know, of course, why human rights are not an easy question in interstate relations. Despite the many things which our CSCE countries share, we all have different cultural traditions and historical experience, and these inevitably have affected and will affect our value systems in different ways. Ours is not a monolithic world, nor should it be.

But these differences do not absolve us of the commitment we each made in Helsinki and Madrid. Nor can they deter us from our task of seeking over time to ensure that progress on respect for human rights-- whether civil, political, cultural, economic or social-- is made in all our countries. I am convinced that national boundaries can never and should never insulate any of us from the natural concern of human being for human being. This is especially so among a group of countries whose destinies have been so closely interlinked, and whose populations have so many ethnic, cultural, religious and intellectual traditions in common.