

women in each state represented in this room who will also follow closely the proceedings of the next weeks, hoping that your deliberations will lead to improved respect for human rights. Obviously the six weeks set aside for your main meeting falls far short of what will be required before respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is as complete and as universal as it must one day be. It is your task to fix the procedures to be followed during the main meeting, which opens on May 7, and to organize its discussion in the way that will best serve the expectations that are centred upon it in all of our countries.

The crucial nature of your responsibility will be obvious to all of you. Nor will it be easy for you to discharge it in the time available, for the mandate set out in the Madrid Concluding Document is couched in brief and general terms. Moreover, and this is not surprising, each of your delegations will have its own distinctive views about how the discussion on procedural and substantive questions should evolve. However thorny or complex the issues may be with which you are called upon to deal, I have every confidence that with a shared determination to do justice to the promise implicit in the CSCE process and with a shared appreciation that mutual interests are best served by a spirit of reasonable compromise, you will succeed in launching the main meeting on a positive course.

In concluding, let me say again how pleased the Government of Canada is to welcome you all to Ottawa. My government will do everything it can do to facilitate your important work, and also to ensure your stay is enjoyable. We look forward to a successful conclusion to your efforts in this preparatory meeting and to a result for the Ottawa meeting as a whole which will fulfill the hopes of Canadians.

Distinguished delegates, I will conclude by citing the words spoken by Alphonse Desjardins the founder of our co-operative movement who said: "The Task is great, and it will take many hands to complete it." I urge you to take up the challenge of cooperation and in this undertaking I wish you every success.