

Canada has been deeply committed to the human dimension of the CSCE. From the outset we stressed the importance of family reunification and freedom of movement to the development of trust and cooperation in Europe. How, we have asked repeatedly, could our people believe that we wanted to heal the divisions of Europe when we could not bring divided families together? Canada's advocacy of human rights, human contacts, and humanitarian cooperation in the CSCE has been reinforced by the anguish of ordinary people arbitrarily cut off from normal contacts with parents, sisters, brothers, children. Canada proposed at Madrid, and hosted in Ottawa, the first CSCE Experts' Meeting devoted to human rights. In many ways, it began the process that led to success at Vienna, and to this conference.

Our particular interest in the human dimension is predicated on the conviction that human freedom, and the freer flow of people, information and ideas, do not threaten any well-founded ideology, government, or social order. Instead they promote stability and security. Our efforts to this end in the CSCE have resulted in commitments that would have been unthinkable only a few years ago.

These are meaningful steps forward if they are fully implemented by all participating states. The greater the expectations that are raised, the greater the disappointment if they are unfulfilled, and the greater the international pressure to comply. Only real change where it counts, in the lives of ordinary people, can provide a firm foundation for lasting progress in the dismantling of barriers, in the building of real and mutual confidence and trust.

It has been only months since the success of the Vienna conference. It may be unrealistic to expect that all good intentions have been fulfilled, all provisions fully complied with. But we have had time enough that we can take stock, ask who has taken steps in the right direction, who has stood still, who has moved backwards in implementing their Vienna commitments. With this we can set our course for the next conference, in Copenhagen, in less than a year. Then it will be fair to expect full compliance with all provisions by all participating states. By then the required laws, procedures, and practices can be in place. By then we will be able to measure progress in the difficult but vital task of confronting and changing the attitudes, habits, prejudices and fears that stand in the way of fulfilling our aspirations in human rights. At Copenhagen, we will see whether we have truly ushered in a new era in European history.