

6. PROBLEMS AND PROMISES: THE HELSINKI FOLLOW-UP MEETING

Promises and Problems of Change

- *Title of the opening section of the Helsinki Summit Declaration, July 1992*

The Charter of Paris contained a blueprint for "A New Era of Democracy, Peace and Unity" in Europe. However, by the time the Helsinki Follow-Up Meeting opened on March 24, 1992, significant portions of Europe appeared distinctly unpeaceful and disunited. Fourteen new states had been added to the CSCE since the Paris Summit. Slovenia, Croatia and Georgia were added at the FUM's opening, and Bosnia-Herzegovina during the FUM's progression, bringing the total to 52.²² There was a lack of confidence in any super-European organization, let alone the CSCE, to deal with the problems all these states were facing. In the East, difficulties in moving to market economies were causing local hardships and feeding disputes involving territory and minorities. In the West, an extended economic downturn and growing popular concern about Europe's future -- which culminated during the FUM with the Danish electorate's rejection of the Maastricht treaty on European unity and crippling strikes by French truckers and farmers -- fuelled pessimism. Throughout the FUM, which lasted until July 8, the escalation of violence in several participating states -- most notably Yugoslavia -- repeatedly drew attention away from developing tools for dealing with future crises to the task of responding to crises at hand.

The FUM was opened by an extraordinary session of the Council of Ministers. The meeting then broke into working groups to deal respectively with institutions and structures, conflict prevention and crisis management, the human dimension and economics, environment, science and technology. These groups collectively arrived at the Helsinki Document 1992, styled "The Challenges of Change," which contained a summit declaration of political goals and priorities and a set of decisions designed to implement them. The Document addressed Canadian interests in a number of ways, beginning with the definition of security.

Comprehensive Security

While the CSCE had always implicitly addressed security from a broad perspective, it now, in the Helsinki Document, specified this understanding explicitly. The Document talked of the concept of comprehensive security, understood to mean:

- 1) security must be cooperative, i.e. no country must strengthen its security to the detriment of other states;
- 2) security is indivisible, i.e. absence of conflict is directly linked to respect for human rights, pluralistic democracy and the rule of law, and the development of economic, environmental, scientific and technical cooperation; and
- 3) the attainment of security depends on flexible global, regional and subregional linkages. The Helsinki Document declared that the CSCE henceforth saw itself as a "regional arrangement" in terms of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, thus opening the

²²Macedonia's membership was blocked by the EC.