

I last spoke before this meeting at its opening session on November 12, 1980. At that time I indicated the world was a better place for the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. Among other achievements it has resulted, as I said then, in a "recognition that, with all due respect for national sovereignty, no state is an island unto itself, able to conduct its affairs, either internal or external in complete disregard of its neighbours". When our Heads of State and Government signed the Final Act, we took upon ourselves certain commitments of the highest political and moral order with respect to principles which should guide relations between states. These are contractual obligations which we made with one another. When these obligations are not observed, it is the right, and indeed the duty, of participating states to draw attention to the violations. In so doing, the question of intervention in internal affairs of other participating states simply does not arise.

It was our unhappy duty during the review of implementation to draw attention to the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, which directly challenged the principles of sovereign equality, of refraining from the threat or use of force, of the inviolability of frontiers (to which the Soviet Union claims to be much attached), of the territorial integrity of states, of non-intervention in internal affairs and of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and also challenged the injunction to conduct our relations with all other states in the spirit of the principles contained in the Final Act. The principles are still being called seriously into question by the continuing Soviet armed presence in Afghanistan. This must inevitably have a profoundly negative effect on détente and harm the prospects for a meaningful dialogue between East and West on those issues which divide us.

In reviewing our respective implementation of the provisions of the Final Act, it was also my unhappy duty, and that of my delegation, to draw attention to the manifold violations of human rights which have taken place in the Soviet Union and in certain other participating states.