

that date back centuries; arbitrarily drawn borders; a legacy of economic bankruptcy and environmental destruction; the social dislocation of people who grew up in the misleading certainty and false security of Communism and who are now faced with the frequently frightening reality of freedom.

There are still too many remnants left over from this tormented past: tragic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, the presence of foreign troops on the soil of the independent Baltic States -- and what was once Yugoslavia.

As has been pointed out, freeing the human spirit has brought new spontaneity, richness and creativity to the European scene, but it has also revealed the depths of nastiness that we can reach.

Security in this sort of world -- the world we live in -- must be underpinned by basic values. The CSCE, as our security framework, has to be able to act -- to intervene -- if these values are trampled.

We all make commitments to respect the rights of minorities. Yet millions are threatened, or perceive themselves to be threatened, because they live on the wrong side of a border, or the wrong side of a mountain, or the wrong side of a river -- even though their parents and grandparents lived there.

Ensuring the equal treatment of all citizens, whatever their ethnic or religious origin, must be the first task of all governments.

The time for clever arguments in this forum has passed. The minority issue in Europe is not a question of definition; it is a question of basic human rights and in many cases basic human survival.

Our CSCE commitments in this regard are clear. The time has come to hold governments to these commitments -- in bilateral relations and multilateral programs. Otherwise, Canada's co-operation with any offending country will be affected.

Mr. Chairman, we condemn in the strongest terms so-called "ethnic cleansing." This odious practice is going on right now -- this very moment -- in many parts of the former Yugoslavia, despite our speeches on peace, security and human rights. We call on the governments of Serbia and Croatia to respect commitments and to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, including the protection of people's lives, whatever group they belong to.

We do not accept that thousands and thousands of people are expelled each week from their homes by thugs. We do not tolerate the horrors endured by former Yugoslav citizens being tortured, violated or forced into horrible conditions to induce them to leave their homes in their own land.