

The questions could be multiplied, but they suggest the scope of the challenges ahead. They involve challenges for all of the states of Europe and North America; the great powers, the middle powers, and the small powers. The nature of the challenges and the shaping of responses will depend more on the geopolitical and institutional positions and interests of the states concerned than on their size. In periods of basic transformation and reconstruction, states and institutions tend to fear marginalization and therefore to seek positions, alliances and linkages which may preserve roles and influence. That task is particularly difficult in a period of dynamic institutional development as competence shifts from national to international institutions, as divisions of labour are refashioned among those institutions and as the orchestration of their interplay is revised.

The role of the CSCE in the new Europe is still to be revised. It will need to be different from the past. Business as usual is a recipe for growing irrelevance. The ideology of the small steps is likely to prove inadequate for a period of historical leaps. However, the unique approach and nature of the CSCE suggests a model for how to break the stalemate of political conflict in other regions, such as the Middle East. Sometimes conflict cannot be resolved by direct negotiation but is, rather, transformed by processes of cooperation capitalizing on shared interests which cut across the cleavages of conflict, focussing on confidence building as a prelude to conflict resolution.