

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR WILLIAM BAUER HEAD OF THE
DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE
EXPERTS MEETING ON HUMAN CONTACTS OF THE CONFERENCE
ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE - 26 MAY 86

Mr. Chairman,

After hours of negotiation, our meeting has failed to reach a consensus on a concluding document.

This is, of course, a disappointment -- especially for those who carried most of the burden of the negotiations and expended so much personal energy in an effort to reach a conclusion. I think particularly of delegates from the Neutral and Non-aligned group of countries who provided draft texts to serve as a basis of negotiations and a skilled coordinator for the negotiations; we are grateful for their sustained and dedicated efforts to bring about a compromise.

It would be a mistake, however, to concentrate too much of our disappointment on our inability to produce a document. Although it was my Delegation's hope, shared by many others, that this meeting might make a genuine contribution to the CSCE provisions on human contacts, we did not envisage that contribution to be just another paper. There are other, more serious, causes for disappointment.

Mr. Chairman, the Canadian Government hoped that this meeting might be seen by some CSCE signatory states as an opportunity to signal some relaxation of their restrictive practices and policies concerning human contacts. As I mentioned in my opening statement, the reference of General Secretary Gorbachov at the 27th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, to the humanitarian element as a fundamental principle of the Soviet approach to international security and his special mention of the need for a humane and positive spirit in resolving questions of family reunification and other human contacts issues, had given us a particular reason to be encouraged. I know there was also similar hope outside our meeting, on the part of large numbers of Canadians whose lives have been so seriously and adversely affected by the existing policies in this field of the Soviet Union and some other countries.

Although we worked hard to formulate reasonable proposals which, if adopted and implemented, would have provided solutions to these questions, my delegation had no expectation that all the proposals put forward by us