



At the opening of the Ottawa meeting, I said that issues of central importance such as human rights cannot and must not be avoided just because they are sensitive and can sometimes give rise to disagreement between governments. The subject of human rights will remain prominent on the international agenda, because respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential to the development of friendly relations and cooperation among us.

Mr. Chairman, when the Final Act was adopted, nobody expected an instant change in human rights practices, or in other fields. What we expected was a gradual improvement, just as those of us who believe deeply in individual human rights continually try to improve our own performance. It is movement in the opposite direction, inadvertently or deliberately, that we must guard against: non-compliance in one area raises serious doubts about the likelihood that commitments in other fields will be fulfilled.

I recognize, Mr. Chairman, that there is a gulf within the CSCE between two very different approaches to the relationship between the individual and the state. We would be deluding ourselves if we thought these differences in approach would disappear quickly. Others, however, would be mistaken if they concluded that Canada's concerns about human rights, human contacts and freer and wider dissemination of information arose from a desire to disturb the internal stability of other states; we simply do not believe that any government represented here is so weak or should feel so insecure that it must treat as criminals or traitors those individuals who believe that we all meant what we said in the Final Act. We take this occasion to affirm that failure to implement the provisions dealing with human rights is related directly to progress on other provisions.

In the field of security, results have been very slow in coming. After more than 18 months, the Stockholm Conference has not achieved any visible progress in concluding the tasks specified in the Madrid mandate. Canada has high hopes that substantive cooperation can emerge from honest dialogue — that the Conference can make a major contribution to the process of building mutual confidence. But these hopes become difficult to sustain — and difficult for our people to share — in the face of an



Group photo of 35 foreign ministers assembled in Helsinki to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the CSCE Final Act.

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apparent attempt to avoid negotiating a set of confidence-building measures, including a comprehensive programme for cooperation in military affairs. I think it is important to note, Mr. Chairman, that these measures were designed to apply equally to the two alliances in Europe. Security is reciprocal: it does not flow from one side demanding unilateral advantages at the expense of the other. We will go forward together, or not at all. Deeds, not words, are the key to mutual confidence, and we shall therefore continue to press for specific undertakings in the field of information and verification....

It is obvious that the CSCE process has not yet fulfilled the promise which so many of us saw in it in 1975. However, despite the lack of measurable progress, the CSCE provided, and will continue to provide, an opportunity for dialogue. That should not be underestimated, particularly if the many strands of dialogue can be woven into a fabric of greater understanding and broader agreement among all signatory states, regardless of their size. But if the CSCE degenerates further into a dialogue of the deaf; if we consistently talk past each other; if, indeed, the very words we use have different meanings, then what can we accomplish? If we continue to indulge in semantic manoeuvring and avoid concrete ac-

tion, how long can the credibility of the CSCE process survive? The credibility of the process is vital, Mr. Chairman. If we simply keep issuing documents and restating our obligations, without carrying out the undertakings we have committed ourselves to at the highest political level, then we run the risk of destroying faith in the utility of the CSCE system. Moreover, without steady progress towards full implementation of all aspects of the Final Act, it will be impossible to create the confidence which is essential to the improvement of East-West relations, which was our primary goal ten years ago. In my view, unless we can create that confidence, it will be particularly difficult to make progress in the fields of arms control and disarmament.

We must never lose sight of the fact that the people whose representatives and leaders we are, will inevitably — and justifiably — question the value of the forms of cooperation spelled out in the Final Act if they do not see concrete and tangible evidence of this cooperation touching their everyday lives. Does cooperation contribute to our sense of security? Does it make it easier for people to get together, regardless of the ideological community in which they live? These are questions for which our people expect more positive answers than we have provided so far."