

clarification from the state or state involved in an emergency situation. In so doing, it had to state why the matter was urgent and why the emergency mechanism was most appropriate. As soon as 12 or more participating states had seconded the request within a maximum period of 48 hours, the meeting would be held two to three days later. Any request addressed by the same state on an identical subject between two regular meetings of the CSO would be inadmissible.

Thanks to a Canadian initiative, Ministers also affirmed the necessity of halting the spread of weapons of mass destruction and promoting restraint and transparency in the transfer of conventional weapons and weapons technologies, particularly to regions of tension. They agreed this should be a priority of CSCE governments and determined to maintain a dialogue on these issues.¹⁸ The meeting also admitted Albania to the CSCE, bringing CSCE membership to 35.

The Human Dimension

Canada had long placed a strong emphasis on the CSCE's third basket. The first CSCE meeting completely devoted to questions of human rights took place in Ottawa in May-June 1985, and Canada had been the most persistent advocate of strengthened human dimension commitments at the 1989 Vienna FUM. Canada's special interest in human dimension questions was due in part to the existence of large and vocal East European ethnic communities in Canada -- frequently mirrored in the composition of the Canadian cabinet -- and in part to Canada's own experience in dealing with minorities.

In Canada's view, attention to the human dimension was an important part of the CSCE's ability to prevent and manage conflicts and related directly to the CSCE's ability to deal with conflicts internal to participating states. As post-Cold War tensions were already sprouting from questions related to the treatment of minorities, Basket III issues had to be firmly tied to CSCE bodies for dealing with security problems.

At the Vienna FUM, participating states adopted a "human dimension mechanism," a procedure that enabled states to enquire of and make representations to other states concerning human rights commitments. It involved the following stages:

- participating states could exchange information in the case of presumed violations of humanitarian undertakings;
- participating states could hold bilateral meetings for the purpose of examining and resolving humanitarian issues;
- any participating state could bring questionable cases or situations to the attention of other states;
- any state could convey information relating to questionable situations at meetings of the human dimension conference or at meetings organized in the context of CSCE FUMs.

¹⁸This initiative stemmed from Canada's non-proliferation "program of action" launched in February 1991, and paralleled Canadian efforts in several multilateral fora, including NATO, the G7 and the OAS, to achieve high-level declarations committing governments to combat proliferation. However, the initiative was also consistent with Canada's view that the CSCE should remain attentive to broader security concerns beyond Europe.