

And to reach agreement on specific measures which will contribute to confidence, stability and security.

We, in the group of nations referred to as the West, have our conception of the type of measure on which we can build. We will present a package of ideas which, if accepted, would be a long step forward, creating a new basis on which to approach arms reduction.

We will propose measures which envisage more openness about basic military information, earlier notice of a wider range of military activities, mandatory rather than voluntary exchanges of observers at important military activities and ways to verify any agreements reached. These measures would promote assurance that the routine military activities of other participants in Europe are not threatening and would make unusual preparation for hostilities more difficult to conceal. They will also treat a practical problem which arises from the present limited mutual confidence: that is, how to deal with emergencies or accidents which could spark crises in Europe.

We have every expectation that others at this conference, individually and collectively, will bring forward their own ideas.

I am sure that some will be more interesting than others.

I am sure that we will be urged to consider measures that would be more declaratory than specific — and I am equally sure that we will, all of us, be vigilant about ideas that, by suggesting slick and easy and apparent solutions to agonizingly difficult problems, could lead us into a false and dangerous sense of security.

But that discussion is still to come.

For the moment let me impress on this gathering the sense of urgency which must attach to our work.

The presence here this week of so many foreign ministers underlines the importance which participating states attach to this conference and to the opportunity which it offers for a new beginning in East-West relations. But, if this conference is to fulfil our expectations, we as foreign ministers cannot confine our involvement in it to being present at its launching. We must undertake to keep the progress of the conference under close review, so that we are prepared to intervene at the political level whenever this may appear necessary to ensure forward movement. The construction of an edifice of mutually reinforcing military and political confidence is an urgent necessity and one which will require the constant application of political will.

Let us, as ministers, commit ourselves here and now to investing this enterprise with a sense of political direction and urgency, and if it proves desirable for us to return to this forum to re-inspire and maintain that momentum, is there any among us who would not come back, who would assign to higher priority to other engagements?

Let us begin negotiate.