

likely to emerge in the Cold War aftermath. The CSCE had a number of advantages over other, existing fora or the creation of new fora. These included:

- 1) **comprehensiveness:** The Helsinki process already dealt with the major related subjects that, in Canada's view, required increased multilateral attention in the region -- confidence-building and arms control, economic and environmental cooperation, human rights and humanitarian cooperation.
- 2) **flexibility:** As a ^{political} process rather than an ^{bureaucratic} organization, the CSCE could readily be adapted to new purposes and priorities, and could provide political impetus in support of new aims.
- 3) **wide membership:** Perhaps most important, the CSCE was the only forum that contained, on an equal footing, all European states (except Albania) and Canada and the US. It appeared to be the only political body that could translate the enticing notion of a Europe whole and free into reality.

There was more than a little Canadian self-interest involved in promoting the CSCE as the major vehicle for restructuring European political and security relations. Many of the CSCE's fields of interest were similar to those of other ^{single-free} more Euro-centric bodies, including the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the European Community (EC) and the Council of Europe. If the CSCE, born in and of a divided Europe, failed to prove its relevance to changed circumstances, other organizations, in which Canada was not -- or was only subordinately -- involved, would take its place. Even before the toppling of the Berlin Wall, it appeared that Canada would play an increasingly minor role in Europe as European economic integration and political cooperation intensified, primarily through the EC. The relaxation of Cold War tensions, welcome though it was, was likely to promote this trend and risk marginalizing North American, and especially Canadian, interests in European calculations. There was thus a sense that Canada had to position itself early and carefully to influence the changes in Europe in directions conducive to continued Canadian involvement.

Canada was not alone in emphasizing the CSCE's potential role in the "new European architecture." By the spring of 1990, the CSCE was being seen by a growing number of states as potentially central to the future political development of Europe -- albeit to a different extent and for different reasons. Eastern and Central Europeans regarded the CSCE as the logical successor to NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet Union saw the CSCE as a means to avoid being left out of European corridors. Germany valued it as a means to calm fears about a reunited Germany. The US emphasized the CSCE's role in encouraging democratic institutions and free market economies in Eastern Europe. European neutrals saw the CSCE as their entrée to the post-Cold War security process.

If the CSCE were to assume the place Canada and others hoped it would, it would have to be reinvigorated and restructured. The Helsinki process was not designed for efficiency. The consensus procedure, though leading to roundly-supported decisions, was cumbersome; participating states did not meet in permanent session; there was no focal point for administrative and logistical support; and there was no established way to convene a meeting outside the program agreed at each follow-up meeting. How, and how successfully, could the CSCE be adapted to respond quickly to Europe's changing demands? How extensive and what kind of security functions would a revamped CSCE have?

Canada started to answer these questions publicly on February 5, 1990, when then