

"The participating states recognized the universal significance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for which is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and cooperation among themselves as among all states."

Mr. Chairman, we expressed the same idea in 1945, in 1948 and in 1975. This year, at Stockholm, we said it most emphatically: Respect for, and the effective exercise of, human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential factors for international peace, justice and security.

At the Ottawa CSCE Meeting -- the first devoted solely to human rights -- the participating states argued their views and called each other to account forcefully. But none of us questioned that human rights and fundamental freedoms derived from the inherent dignity of the human person -- not just the East-West person -- nor that they are essential for his free and full development, for his security.

Above all, the Canadian delegation argued then, and argues now, that everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. We also maintained, and we still do, that organizations and persons, as well as governments and institutions, have a relevant and positive role to play in contributing to the achievement of the aim of cooperation amongst states.

On this basis, together with other delegations in Ottawa, we strongly supported the right of the individual to know and act upon his rights; the rights of minorities; the role of organizations and individuals in contributing to the full exercise of human rights; respect for the freedom of religion and belief; the elimination of torture; freedom of movement; and monitoring respect for the principles and implementation of the provisions of the Final Act.

We put forward suggestions and submitted or co-sponsored specific proposals on all of these points.

In doing this we sought to further the dialogue on human rights in order to identify and to analyze why and how human rights are violated, in an effort to induce states to bring their policies into line with their international obligations. This goal which we pursue elsewhere, at the United Nations in New York and Geneva