— we have taken important new steps to protect the rights and improve the working conditions of journalists, and provide for the freer flow of information and greater access to culture.

Built on this solid achievement in human rights and Basket III, and providing a mechanism for its protection and enforcement, is the Conference on the Human Dimension. We welcome the agreement of all participating States to respond to requests for information and to consult bilaterally on specific cases and situations. We look forward to the meetings in Paris, Copenhagen and Moscow where we can pursue the issues of compliance and of new measures to enhance our achievements, as well as to deal with unresolved cases and situations. This Conference and the ongoing mechanism will keep human rights, human contacts, and related humanitarian issues central to the CSCE process, ensuring that they become a permanent part of the European political landscape....

Two things should be clearly understood. First, by accepting the Moscow meeting, Canada has not signified that problems of human rights and human contacts in the Soviet Union no longer exist. On the contrary, much remains to be done. Indeed, the USSR has undertaken to continue its work over the next two years of making Soviet society more open, democratic, and governed by the rule of law. Reforms are to be securely institutionalized. We welcome these promised undertakings, and will look forward to their fulfilment.

The second point I want to emphasize is that, having discussed this matter with the Soviet Union, having examined all the facts and assessed its performance against criteria we know to be important to the Canadian people, we consented to the Moscow meeting not just as a compromise or as a political gesture. Our consent should be seen as an expression of hope, based on recent improvements, and of confidence that the future will bring even more.

We trust that when our delegations, and the hundreds of groups, individuals, and journalists that traditionally assemble for CSCE meetings, gather in Moscow in 1991, they will find an open and tolerant environment for frank exchange.

There are many, many more provisions on human rights and humanitarian cooperation in the Vienna Concluding Document which take account of the differing interests of our peoples. Canada considers all of them important. Together, they are a great achievement. In most cases they are clear and unequivocal. We recognize that there is still room for improvement, but what is in this document will, if fully implemented by all participating States, lead to great changes in the lives of millions of people, and will have a real impact on European confidence and security. Let me illustrate by one example from our own experience.

On December 7, many communities in Armenia were struck by a devastating earthquake that killed outright some 25,000 people and injured thousands more. At one time, the Government of the Soviet Union and some other participating countries faced with a similar disaster might have said there was no problem, no help was needed. But this time it did not. From all over the world, offers of help came forward spontaneously, inspired by a natural human feeling of sympathy. The Canadian Government responded to the need for assistance....

Mr. Chairman, I do not think anything could better demonstrate what we have been saying for many years—that the ties between people, that grow naturally from common experience and humanity, are one of the keys to a peaceful world. When people know the truth, when they can have contact with each other, they will reach out across barriers, they will forge links far stronger than governments can ever build. When people are barred from travelling, from visiting with families, from having ordinary contacts, from worshipping freely, from speaking a language or practising a culture, their frustrations breed fear, resentment and instability. When arbitrarily imposed and artificial barriers are removed and people, ideas, and information can move without restraint, when freedom becomes a reality, then there will be no limit to the possibilities that will open before us.

Some participating States have learned that lesson in the past two years. But we must also remind ourselves where these changes have fallen short of expectations and commitments and of what remains to be done. Candor and openness have done much to achieve the success we now enjoy. This is not the moment to abandon them.

In some countries, individuals are still being punished for exercising their right to know and act upon their rights, for criticizing their governments, and for conducting allegedly subversive activity. Indeed, one participating State has, at the very moment of the adoption of this forward-looking Concluding Document, trampled, in Prague, on both its old and its new commitments by taking violent action against groups engaged in the peaceful exercise of their human rights under the Helsinki Final Act and the Vienna Concluding Document.

Another participating State has, in the face of CSCE tradition and procedures, declared that, notwithstanding its action in giving consensus to the whole Concluding Document, it assumed no commitment to implement those provisions which it considered to be 'inadequate.' By taking this approach, the Government of Romania seems to be attempting to treat the Vienna Concluding Document as a menu from which it would choose those items it would abide by and those it would ignore. This is clearly an untenable interpretation. Our CSCE commitments, arrived at by consensus, are indivisible. My Government, therefore, considers that all participating States must comply with all aspects of this document, to which we have all given consensus.

The Governments of these participating States must in coming years decide whether they want to move forward in renewal and reform, or cling to policies and methods that are not only distasteful, but now demonstrably outmoded and counterproductive. Canada will continue to encourage change, to criticize shortcomings, to urge the breaking down of barriers. We have no desire to impose our system or beliefs on anyone, but we are convinced that Europe can be a stable and secure place only when all its people can enjoy freedom and personal dignity, and feel safe from the arbitrary exercise against them of the force of the state...." □