

- I. Questions relating to security in Europe, encompassing both ten basic principles guiding relations between the participating States and a number of confidence building measures;
- II. Co-operation in the fields of economics, science and technology and the environment;
- III. Co-operation in humanitarian and other fields.

Structure of the Helsinki Conference

The Final Recommendations of the MPT also outlined the rules and procedures of the conference. It was agreed that all states would participate as sovereign and independent states and in conditions of full equality. In fact, it was specifically stated that the conference would take place outside of military alliances. This was expressed in the principle of consensus which was to govern the decision making process.

The conference was to function through a number of working bodies including a coordinating committee which was to be its central organ. In addition, committees and sub-committees were provided, which could set up their own working groups. All working bodies and working groups were to be open to all participating states.

The Final Recommendations also provided for an Executive Secretary to be charged with technical matters. This individual was to be a representative of the corresponding host country. Hence, the original conference structure had only very limited administrative support. (This was enhanced at the Paris Summit of 1990 as will be explained in detail later on in this study.)

Decision-Making Process

Decision-making at meetings within the framework of the CSCE is only possible by consensus. This rule was laid down in the 1973 Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations as follows: "Decisions of the Conference shall be taken by consensus. Consensus shall be understood to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a representative and submitted by him as constituting an obstacle to the taking of the decision in question."¹

¹ Arie Bloed, From Helsinki to Vienna: Basic Documents of the Helsinki Process, Dordrecht, Boston and London, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1990, pg. 12.