

## SUMMARY

This paper examines Canada's contribution to the development of the conflict prevention and management capability of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) between 1990 and 1994. During this period, the CSCE evolved from being a series of meetings that served primarily as a forum for Western criticism of Eastern human rights practices to a full-fledged organization with a "hands-on" role in dampening potential and actual conflicts throughout Eurasia. Canada has been among the most ardent advocates of this evolution, viewing the CSCE's flexibility, wide-ranging agenda and broad membership as well-suited to address the problems facing Europe in the Cold War aftermath. Canada also saw the CSCE as an ideal vehicle for retaining a Canadian voice in European security deliberations. Beginning in early 1990, Canada fed into the CSCE a series of working papers that helped to shape the thinking of participating states regarding the CSCE's development. Canadian ideas found substantial echoes in the major CSCE documents of the period.

The themes guiding Canadian thinking were the need for the CSCE to: 1) become a vehicle for building "cooperative security" by paying attention to the whole range of inter-state relations, including military security, economic well-being, democratic development and respect for human rights; 2) develop an institutional framework, so that the CSCE could address pressing issues as they arose; and 3) establish mechanisms for crisis prevention and conflict resolution. Canada made this last a priority within the CSCE and made several contributions at both the conceptual and operational level. These included, inter alia, efforts to ensure that the CSCE:

- retained its multidimensional focus and <sup>and</sup> its comprehensive membership;
- developed a broad menu of instruments for conflict prevention and resolution;
- strengthened "human dimension" commitments and linked their implementation to the CSCE's developing conflict prevention machinery;
- created a Conflict Prevention Centre with a dual mandate to support 1) the political prevention and management of conflict and 2) the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures;
- established long-term missions, which have proved to be one of the most successful aspects of the CSCE's conflict prevention work;
- created a framework for CSCE peacekeeping; and
- improved its political cooperation and institutional ties with other security organizations, such as the UN and NATO.

Canada was not the first or only state to put forward many of these ideas, but Canada frequently exercised an influence disproportionate to its size. Canada's skill lay in having thought enough about the CSCE and how Canada wanted it to develop such that when others were ready to move in a certain direction, Canada could insert a well-developed proposal for doing so.