

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires
extérieures

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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE
CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

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Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada

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Canada

This is a crucial meeting. It comes at a time when confidence in some quarters seems to be eroding in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). The results of our work here -- the decisions we adopt -- will have a decisive effect on the future of the Conference.

The credibility of the CSCE in managing crises and preventing or resolving conflicts is being questioned by the media and others, since it failed to deal successfully with the conflict in Yugoslavia. That experience dampened the enthusiasm that came out of the Paris Summit.

Security Framework

Let's be clear, the CSCE is still the only institution with a mandate to deal with security in all its forms and with a pan-European and transatlantic membership. By warmly welcoming our new states, it is in all our interests to see our membership become as broad as possible. Our new members will take their CSCE commitments seriously. The CSCE will be called on if these commitments are broken.

But the CSCE cannot act alone. And it need not try to.

At their Summit in Rome three months ago, the leaders of the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) pledged to support the CSCE. They were not pretending to any right to "police" the CSCE region. But they recognized that, in Europe's "framework of interlocking institutions," NATO fosters a sense of security and confidence.

Assured by the security that NATO provides, the CSCE could proceed with more confidence in building co-operative security.

Human Dimension

On the subject of threats to security, the seeds of tension and conflict also lie in the human dimension, a fundamental aspect of the CSCE.

But it is time to stop writing new normative standards on respect for human rights or the rule of law or democratic institutions. Now we need to focus on monitoring and implementation. We must use the human dimension mechanism in more effective ways as part of our conflict prevention machinery.

The human dimension mechanism should address the full range of human rights issues -- from minority questions to concerns about racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism. We need to ensure that our commitment to protect individuals and groups from racial, ethnic or religious discrimination is followed up. It must include the enforcement of laws and the prosecution of violators.

Above all, there is the need to create viable pluralist democracies. These are no longer questions of political theory. As your own country shows, Mr. Chairman, they are issues of practice.

Democratic development is the best security builder there is. But it consists of much more than just holding elections. Effective democracy is based on the protection of human and minority rights. This requires an independent judiciary for their protection. These are all factors apt to reduce the threat of mass migrations.

Mass Migrations

A new aspect of the human dimension is the threat of mass migrations of people in Europe.

Migration and the difficult issues it involves, such as the right to citizenship -- a most fundamental human right, are not easy. In Canada, as in many other countries, the question of refugees and asylum-seekers remains controversial. But we recognize that these issues are destabilizing and must be addressed. A CSCE meeting on the question of migration, as the U.S. suggested, might be a good start.

Arms Transfers and Non-Proliferation

The excess of dangerous weapons in the world is our responsibility. I applaud the declaration last night by President Bush and the response by President Yeltsin. There remains much to be done.

Two terrible threats to peace in the world stand out. One is the reversal of gains being made in Central and Eastern Europe -- in all of those states, but particularly in those that have nuclear weapons. The participation of our new members in this organization should be a guard against such a reversal.

The second threat to peace is a proliferation of nuclear weapons, technology and brain-power from countries with nuclear know-how to other countries. We need a common approach to this.

For example, in 1995, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is to be reviewed. It should be extended indefinitely, and we must redouble efforts to press non-signatories to sign it.

But signatures on the NPT are not enough. Iraq had signed the NPT. We need an intrusive system of inspections under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It should focus on problem countries. And we must agree to finance it adequately.

As a matter of urgency, we also need, as countries, greatly tightened export control regimes on all aspects of nuclear systems and missile technology. We particularly urge the new nations to quickly enact and implement appropriate export controls to ensure that their nuclear weapon materials are not exported to states harbouring ambitions to acquire nuclear weapons.

We should also back schemes for averting nuclear migration by ensuring that there is alternative employment for experts who would harness their expertise for the benefit of safe, peaceful nuclear energy programs and environmental needs in their own countries. We must support our partners in this endeavour.

Nuclear weapon states must accelerate the build-down of nuclear weapons. Even as we welcome the cuts just announced by President Bush and President Yeltsin, I believe that more must come. Undeniably, there is a political connection between downsizing in nuclear states, including countries represented in this room, and our making a convincing case to others on horizontal proliferation.

At our meeting in Berlin, in the wake of the Gulf War, I also highlighted conventional weapons transfers and their potential danger.

I believe that our Council has a responsibility to speak clearly and forcefully on this problem. In doing so, we should support the work of the United Nations at the past General Assembly in the area of arms transfers.

The CSCE brings together many of the key countries involved in this issue. We have a special opportunity, therefore, to send a message to the world that we are serious.

I am pleased with the statement on non-proliferation and conventional weapons transfers that we are issuing today.

I shall leave to others the issue of Yugoslavia. But it is vital that this organization deal with the hard issue of conflict in a real way. Help stop the killing. Help obtain the security guarantees that fearful minorities crave.

Support UN peacekeeping and, when the circumstances are right, ensure that those states meet CSCE standards of peaceful comprehensive security.