

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire
d'État aux
Affaires
extérieures

91/38

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
TO THE CSCE MEETING ON HUMAN DIMENSION**

**MOSCOW, U.S.S.R.
September 10, 1991**

Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada

External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

I would like to join others in welcoming our three new participating states -- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania -- Canada has long been a supporter of the Baltic States and looks forward to working with them in their newfound freedom.

As we open this historic meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), the principles and processes of our organization are again being challenged. In post-1989 Europe there is much to celebrate but still much to fear.

Canada is not part of this continent. But for us, the expression, "from Vladivostok to Vancouver" is more than rhetorical flourish. Security in Europe deeply concerns us. Canada has fought two World Wars on this continent. Our families come from here. What happens in Europe comes to us instantly on our television screens. Our security is indivisible from yours.

Canada itself is a fortunate land, but also not one without difficulties. At the current time, we are in deep debate over our own internal political structures and we are emerging from a troubling recession which is now, more clearly every day, turning around and leading us once again into prosperity. I'm making this point because Canadians have their own worries which are made more anxious in a world where directly or indirectly their own insecurity becomes an issue.

Canadians are deeply committed to values that are now taking hold -- the ascendancy of human rights, the rule of law, political pluralism. In Canada we are engaged in trying to bring decision-makers closer to people. We are making government more understanding and responsive to real needs and concerns. We are working together to recognize the distinct elements in our society and to build a spirit of harmony and co-operation that celebrates those differences. This is Canada's agenda -- we believe it is one that is shared by the countries represented around this table.

We have watched the courageous assertion of the individual's sense of human rights, of a free press, of civil liberties that began in Poland and culminated recently in the Russian Parliament. We laud these achievements. But they need to be enshrined as universal values and as binding features of international security.

In the last few weeks alone, the contours of European security have shifted once again, renewing the challenge to adapt our own institutions -- or even to devise a new European security structure. New threats to security are outpacing our genius to devise new ways of coping with them. These menaces will not wait for the architects of the new security order.

We know that ethnic and nationalist ambitions, temporarily repressed by communist rule can -- once let loose again -- threaten the new democratic systems. That is beginning to happen already. The latent ethnic and national antagonisms are carrying

us back to an older situation. Are we doomed to perpetuate ancient hatreds?

We know now that the great threat to European security in the 1990s is not the danger of a large-scale Soviet aggression; but rather the dangers inherent in a chaotic breakdown of the social and political structures due in part to a resurgence of ethnic hostility and tensions. Peaceful and democratic structural change is one thing -- violent upheaval is something else.

We have seen that dramatically illustrated right here in the city in which we meet in recent weeks. We are encouraged by, and sympathetic to, efforts under way to construct a new federation in the Soviet Union. But events here over the last weeks have not allayed our fears. Would democracy prevail? Where did the Soviet military stand? Who controlled the nuclear arsenal? We have been more than assured on the first -- indeed the dedication to democracy displayed here in August will be remembered as one of the significant moments of this century. But we must seek from the Soviet Union an equally firm commitment regarding control over its still massive military capability. And we seek undertakings concerning the implementation of conventional force reductions and START.

Last February, as the Gulf war raged around us, my Prime Minister called, in the strongest possible terms, for a renewed world commitment to arms control. In the nuclear field, surely we have waited long enough for decisive action. We knew that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms in the Third World was a mounting threat to global security. Yet it took SCUD missiles falling on Riyadh and Tel Aviv to remind us in the most profound way. Will concern about the actual control of nuclear in the U.S.S.R. warheads drive home more clearly the point that there are far too many nuclear weapons in the world? On what is called the vertical side of proliferation, the START Treaty is that -- a good start. But that is not the end of the story -- we must find a way to continue the work now so well begun. This in turn will enable us to address even more effectively nuclear proliferation to more countries -- the so-called horizontal side. In a phrase -- this insanity must end permanently!

The end of the so-called Cold War, which so occupied these CSCE councils, permitted the United Nations to react strongly against Iraq. This success provides an opportunity for us to build upon and to advance the cause of world security by strengthening the United Nations. And it provides the tangible evidence and incentive necessary to arrest the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms in unstable regions of the world.

Canada believes that the CSCE can be a forum for taking collective action against proliferation of weapons. We shall

continue to press this issue within the CSCE as we head into the critical lead-time towards the renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But even the enhanced capacity of the United Nations to intervene to reverse aggression will not be enough to ensure security on a global basis. We also need effective regional security. We need arrangements which -- on a co-operative basis -- can address underlying causes of insecurity and instability.

This means border disputes, ethnic conflicts and civil strife which raise a potential threat to European security. To manage such crises, we set up a Conflict Prevention Centre and we arranged for emergency meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials. Both institutions were quickly mobilized by the crisis in Yugoslavia. But, how did they do? What did we learn from those experiences?

We learned that we must act promptly and effectively. While the CSCE has a capacity for political persuasion, it does not have the power of coercion. It does not command the potential military force of a NATO or the economic power of the European Community. However, it is the only structure motivated by the opinion of the entire Euro-Atlantic community of democratic nations. And therein lies its potential. We must find immediate ways of translating that opinion into rapid action to conciliate and settle disputes. We must empower CSCE institutions to act quickly through fact-finding, mediation, peacekeeping, even peace-making. These are the attributes of the political management of security. And the problems of security in Europe today are more political than military. Our task is to keep them at the political level rather than reverting to military force.

One year ago, on the eve of the Paris Summit, we were endorsing ideas and drafting words which were full of hope: "the end of the Cold War," "the end of the division of Europe," "the opening of a new era of democracy, peace and unity." We spoke of "fulfilling the hopes and expectations our peoples have cherished for decades."

A little more than one month ago, news from this city made us fear, for a few terrifying hours, that we risked sinking back into the frigid abyss of the Cold War; and that the democratic ideals which we believed were taking hold in Europe had been brutally overturned once again. But the changes initiated in the Soviet Union by President Gorbachev proved to be enduring. The words of the Paris Charter, the Copenhagen Document and the Helsinki Final Act have been transformed into living creeds by the people for whom they have been created -- and, to their credit, they have withstood the challenges of the old, discredited philosophies.

Five years ago, when the Soviet Union first proposed to hold a meeting on human rights in Moscow it seemed virtually impossible, almost as impossible as the events of the past few years which have so fundamentally changed the context of global relations.

This meeting is one of many initiatives inspired by President Gorbachev. It is a high point on the courageous trek from tyranny to democracy. President Yeltsin and other reformers in the Soviet Union have taken up the challenge and continue to blaze the trail to freedom, human rights and social justice for all with great courage and conviction. Our gathering here in Moscow is a vital link in the chain of nations which is forming from Vladivostok to Vancouver between countries which share a dedication to the rule of law, political plurality and a fundamental respect for human rights and freedoms. Strengthening this chain is the business of our meeting here in Moscow. The principles expressed here form the basis of solutions to the problems of security in Europe today.

The principles of the CSCE cannot be applied selectively. The tragic events in Yugoslavia confirm the need to embrace them totally. An essential principle must be the elaboration and adoption of agreed standards for the treatment of ethnic minorities -- for a society is only as strong as its most vulnerable member.

The Charter of Paris enjoins us to address the issue of minorities. The Participating States made a start in this regard at the second meeting of this Conference at Copenhagen. The Meeting of Experts on Minorities held in Geneva in July took the process a modest step further; but it also confirmed what a long road lies ahead. Our role now as ministers is to make sure that we address this task as an urgent one, that it doesn't lapse into another arid talkathon. We must take decisive action.

The question of minority rights remains the most important and explosive issue on the agenda of this meeting. But we need to move ahead in other areas of the human dimension where our collective will can take us further in the new circumstances which have opened before us. We confirmed in the Paris Charter that freedom and political pluralism are also fundamental to the successful transition to market economies. Free enterprise and freedom of the individual go hand in hand, not as an ideology but as a fundamental way of living our lives together on this planet.

Despite our best efforts and intentions, there is still much work to do in fully implementing the range of commitments we each have as CSCE Participating States. I, for one, remain aware that anti-semitism persists among us -- and must be eradicated, whether it takes the form of restricted exit permits or the fear of pogroms. Others will have other examples. Also, although we no longer need to come to CSCE meetings with long lists of people

-- victims of their own governments -- even in this radically changed environment, there are individuals who continue to suffer and whose names must be brought to the attention of this forum.

I bring these issues forward because I believe we can now approach our discussions in a new co-operative spirit -- one in which we help each other to find solutions -- not simply identify problems. We have a better understanding of the complexities of democratic society and the very difficult challenge of finding the right balance between rights, freedoms and responsibilities. We need to focus on those areas that require special attention -- minority rights, hate propaganda, anti-semitism, democratic development (recalling that our experts will be discussing this subject in detail in Oslo in November).

The Copenhagen Document signed last June is comprehensive and continues to be a valid guide for us. It does not need to be rewritten here in Moscow. However, there are areas which have not received the attention they deserve. At this meeting Canada will be presenting proposals on two such important areas: the question of women's equality and the role of an independent judiciary in democratic society.

Women's equality is fundamental to building a democratic society in which all members of society are afforded the same rights and responsibilities. I believe you will find our proposal clear and comprehensive with its roots in the work of the UN in its forward-looking strategies and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It includes issues such as the need to accelerate de facto equality between women and men, to encourage full participation by women in all aspects of political and public life, the vital role of women's non-governmental organizations and the need to take effective measures to eliminate violence against women, particularly the disturbing problem of domestic violence. I believe the time is long overdue for CSCE countries to address this question in a meaningful way. We will be looking for your support.

Similarly, we want an agreement in the Moscow Document on the independence of the judiciary.

This principle is fundamental to the establishment and maintenance of societies based on the rule of law. Building on the work of the United Nations, we would like to see CSCE Participating States commit themselves to certain standards and principles regarding the independence of judges and legal practitioners. We also look forward to your support on this initiative.

In this same spirit, we will carefully consider proposals made by other delegations and we shall support those which accelerate the human dimension process.

Finally, we need to consider mechanisms that ensure compliance with commitments in the human dimension. In Copenhagen we established the human dimension mechanism. It has already proven its worth -- even if we would rather not have had the opportunity to test it. Canada will actively consider proposals for strengthening this mechanism.

A final word about human dimension meetings themselves. As we look to the future, we need to decide where the human dimension of the CSCE is going. There are some who have questioned whether or not the CSCE actually needs to have a special focus on the human dimension. They suggest that our work is done, the Cold War is over, and they tell us that there are other organizations that could probably do this work better. We strongly disagree. In Canada's view, the human dimension is an integral part of the CSCE process, not only valid, but essential. It is the essence of our new security architecture. Therefore, we favour more meetings on the human dimension and look forward to discussing how we might best mobilize our efforts.

I believe that we must use this meeting not simply to review the past, but to prepare for the future. We must ensure that this dynamic CSCE process continues to provide a comprehensive foundation for that future. An exciting political process is under way in Europe. Countries are emerging from political cocoons -- testing long-awaited freedoms and ideas. We must ensure that there is both a moral and political framework in place so that no idea -- except the most destructive -- is ever again repressed.

Human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic development are essential components of security. We cannot continue to build this new Europe of hope and justice if we have not entrenched these inherent rights. I am confident that our delegations can work together to capture the spirit and the magic of the human souls that have provided us with this unique and historic opportunity. We must not fail them or the generations to follow.