



CANADA

Communiqué

No. 6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 16, 1973

STATEMENT MADE ON JANUARY 16, 1973
BY MR E. A. CÔTÉ,
THE CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE
MULTILATERAL PREPARATORY TALKS,
HELSINKI, REGARDING THE
PROPOSED CONFERENCE ON
SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

Mr. Chairman:

I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing the support of my Government for the agenda which has been suggested by my distinguished Belgian colleague. We consider that this reflects a reasonable and practical approach which we believe, from the consultations which have been going on over recent months, corresponds to the subject matter with which most people would expect the proposed conference to deal.

We also wish to support the concept of a close relationship between the agenda as proposed and the draft mandates submitted by Belgium, Italy and Denmark. The elaboration of clear mandates or terms of reference for the bodies which will, in the second phase of the conference, be responsible for the detailed examination of the agenda is a practical expression of what we have meant by careful and adequate preparation for the conference. We feel that agreement to such terms of reference will be essential to the establishment of the kind of understanding by all sides which must precede a decision to convoke the conference. We doubt that the elements in these documents will come as a surprise, since it is our impression that they have already been touched on and discussed in bilateral and multilateral consultations which have taken place between the countries here represented over the past several months.

Canada has a particular interest in, and attaches particular importance to, the work of the committee which we propose should be set up to deal with the third item of the agenda as outlined by our Belgian colleague. We wish to associate Canada in the closest way possible with the proposals made by our Danish colleague. In supporting the Danish submission, I would mention that we consider that the mandate is closely inter-related with the corresponding agenda item proposed by Belgium and should be read together with it. It is our understanding that these terms of reference describe and elaborate the more general words of the agenda item as proposed, as do those of the other mandates.

Progress in this area will doubtless be gradual but we regard it as an essential complement to the other measures which we hope the conference will take to improve security, stability and confidence in Europe. It will not be enough for governments to agree to certain principles designed to guide relations between states, or even for them to expand co-operation between official agencies. The détente process will be incomplete if it does not in some specific way touch the people of our countries. This can be done by providing for practical measures which will progressively reduce barriers to the movement of human beings and information, barriers which today seem more characteristic of an earlier and less happy era.

The interest of Canada in this subject has been expressed on many occasions, the most recent being when the Canadian Government set out its programme to the new Parliament in Canada earlier this month. That statement contained the following passage:

"Multilateral preparatory talks for the long-awaited Conference on European Security and Co-operation are now under way. Canada has urged that the main conference, to which Canada will be a party, give due weight to the questions of freedom of movement of people, of trade, of information and of technology between East and West."

Canada is in a particularly good position to appreciate the value of this proposal because our society is a mosaic made up of people who have come from other lands and who have remained, free to pursue their lives wherever they wish. We have drawn our cultural values from a wide variety of other places, but principally from Europe. We feel that we have been immensely enriched by the interplay of human and cultural resources which have been brought to us and by having had access to the widest possible range of information and ideas. We therefore believe that in today's rapidly shrinking world this is indeed the direction in which we all should proceed.

Because of the nature of the Canadian population, which is made up in large part of persons whose roots lie in Europe and some of whose relatives still reside there, a particularly important element in this proposed item is that relating to the reunification or regular meeting of members of families. We are realistic enough to realize that this is not an easy problem and there will be legal and other considerations which will have to be taken into account. Any measures taken will obviously have to be by mutual agreement of the participating states but it should be emphasized that in this area we believe that the greatest possible weight should be given to humanitarian considerations.

As for the other elements in the proposed responsibilities of the committee, these have been expounded with considerable eloquence by my Danish colleague. It remains only for me to say that we think there are benefits to be had for all states participating here, including Canada, from a broadening of educational and cultural exchanges and from a wider flow of information. Great changes are taking place in the cultural and educational environment of all of us and our people have to face challenges to personal values posed by the conditions of modern life. To do this, a broader content in the area of cultural relations is needed: this is recognized in the document which you have before you. It is our intention that in the consideration of these wider relationships Canada will play a part because of its interest in continuing the cultural inter-relationships with Europe which have characterized and enriched its past growth.

The scientific and technological revolution and the flood of information which is being made available, together with many other economic and social factors call for new approaches in education. It is our hope that a wide field for collaboration can be found in this area, particularly in exchanges of experience in teaching methods and in the improvement of opportunities for study or research abroad.

Cultural and educational exchanges will be enhanced in their effectiveness if a greater flow of information between our countries can be stimulated. We have at our disposal the most advanced means of transmitting ideas and information and we must take advantage of these more and more to extend the understanding of one another without which our mutual cultural development will not achieve its potential.

Mr. Chairman, in seconding these proposals put forward by our Danish colleague, we express the hope that all others here will approach this matter in an open-minded way. Our interest is not in engaging in propaganda; we have no interest in levelling accusations, creating insecurity or undermining confidence. Our interest is in creating greater confidence, in seeing that realistic and significant steps are taken in the progressive

development of more meaningful contacts between our peoples. We emphasize that these measures will constitute a first step, but an important one.

Unless the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe tackles the question of human contacts seriously, we are not going to be able to achieve the improved conditions in Europe which this conference is supposed to create. It is perhaps not too much to say that the successful treatment of this item will be a touchstone for the success of the conference as a whole.