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CANADA AGREES TO VIENNA DOCUMENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (CSCE)

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today announced that Canada will join consensus on the Concluding Document of the Third Follow-up Meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The Foreign Ministers of the 35 participating countries - all the countries of Europe except Albania, plus Canada and the United States - will close the Meeting in Vienna this week. Mr. Clark will speak on Thursday, January 19.

The CSCE is a series of conferences and agreements which follows from the Helsinki Final Act (1975) and has as its basic objectives to enhance security and confidence, to break down barriers between East and West and to facilitate the freer flow of people, information and ideas. The Vienna meeting began in November 1986.

Mr. Clark described the Vienna Document as a major breakthrough in all areas covered by the CSCE process and a solid foundation for further progress in the search for stability and security in Europe. He noted that Canada had played a major and constructive role in all aspects of the Vienna negotiations.

Mr. Clark especially welcomed the decisions to launch two negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe and to establish an ongoing Conference on the Human Dimension to deal with human rights and related issues. The arms negotiations will aim to achieve results that would be both effective and verifiable, and significantly reduce military tensions in Europe. The human dimension meeting will keep essential human rights and humanitarian questions central to the East/West agenda.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada

"Canada has always been deeply committed to the principles embodied in the Helsinki Declaration and has pursued vigorously those ideals in each follow-up meeting", Mr. Clark added. "We will continue to work hard in coming years to realize the promise of Vienna. We must ensure that all countries fulfill their commitments. We must make a bold and constructive response to the challenge presented by an improving climate of confidence in East/West relations".

Attached at Annex is a summary of some of the hundreds of specific commitments in the Vienna Concluding Document which will be of special interest to Canadians.

ANNEX

Some Highlights of the Vienna Concluding Document

- In military security, two distinct negotiations are being launched:
 - a negotiation based on the achievements of the Stockholm Conference in developing confidence and security-building measures to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe;
 - within the same CSCE framework, an autonomous negotiation among the 23 members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact will seek to eliminate any capability for large-scale aggression and achieve a balance of conventional armed forces at lower levels.
- In human rights and humanitarian cooperation, governments agree to:
 - respect the right of citizens to participate actively in the promotion and protection of human rights; ensure that those exercising rights are not discriminated against; ensure that remedies are available, including appeal to governmental or judicial organs, and the right to a fair hearing; recognize the role of NGOs and individuals in promoting human rights and allow them information, contacts, and free expression.
 - ensure freedom of religion and prevent discrimination against religious communities and individuals; recognize the status of religious communities and ensure their right to places of worship, institutional structures, sacred books and publications in the language of choice, and to appoint personnel and secure funding;
 - protect the human rights of minorities; promote their identities; allow their cultural expression; and allow contacts with counterparts elsewhere.
 - respect freedom of movement within and between countries including the right to leave any country and return to one's own country.
 - ensure that no one is subject to arbitrary arrest, exile or detention; protect individuals from abuse of psychiatric practices; improve treatment of prisoners.

- make decisions on applications for travel for family meetings within one month, and for family reunification and marriage within three months; decide on urgent humanitarian cases as soon as possible; allow families to travel together;
- shorten the time of refusal of emigration permission on grounds of access to security; provide regular reviews on appeal; resolve long-term refusenik cases.
- resolve all outstanding applications for exit permission within six months and conduct regular reviews thereafter.
- provide information and consult bilaterally on specific cases and situations; convene a Conference on the Human Dimension, meeting in Paris (1989), Copenhagen (1990), and Moscow (1991), to consider human rights, human contacts, and related humanitarian issues, and to deal with unresolved cases and situations.
- guarantee the freedom and privacy of postal and telephone communications.
- facilitate the freer and wider flow of information;
- convene follow-up meetings including an Information Forum (London, April-May 1989), a Symposium on the European Cultural Heritage (Cracow, 1991), and discussion of the application of third-party involvement in the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes.
- In economic and related cooperation, governments agree to:
 - improve business contacts and information;
 - convene an Economic Conference including business persons (Bonn, 1990) to discuss ways to improve East/West commercial relations.
 - improve cooperation in science and technology including direct contacts among scientists and respect for the human rights of scientists.
 - strengthen environmental cooperation and promote public awareness and involvement.