

Statement

Secretary of
State for
External Affairs



Déclaration

Secrétaire
d'État aux
Affaires
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NOTES FOR REMARKS BY
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AT THE
CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (CSCE)
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING

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The historic significance of this first meeting of the Council of Ministers -- and in this historic place, at this historic time, is not lost on us.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CSCE

The opportunity here today is to develop this institution to provide more effectively for the security of Europe.

It is a challenge with direct relevance to us as Canadians because it is our security as well that is at stake.

Throughout our history it has been clear that Canadian and European security has been indivisible -- conflict in Europe involves Canada directly because so many of our interests lie in Europe.

A COMMUNITY OF VALUES

In today's environment we must not neglect the message of the Helsinki Act itself, and focus too narrowly on security as it is normally understood.

We are in reality speaking about a community of values -- a community of democratic values.

The events of the last years make the sharing of these values a reality, not a rhetorical objective.

Democracy in Europe is a fact -- one acquired through great struggle and at considerable cost. I and other Canadians salute those here today who were personally involved in those struggles in their homelands. This is an historic meeting for all of us, but particularly for you.

DEMOCRACY: THE MOST EFFECTIVE BINDER OF SECURITY

The systemic benefit of the spread of democracy has been the strengthening of European security. Democracies can work together in trust at many more levels than totalitarian societies.

The impulse in relationships among democracies is towards a multiplicity of contacts and interrelationships as our Polish friend has pointed out in his relevant remarks. These contribute to confidence-building.

A sense of interdependence, backed by strong public support, is the best security builder there is.

A particular challenge we face is helping you, our friends in Central and Eastern Europe, consolidate your new democracies.

Your publics will then be able to make significant choices and see those choices translated into political reality.

There are, however, barriers to overcome. For example -- economic hardship.

The actual situation of the economies of Central and Eastern Europe is reserved for another item on our agenda, but here I wish to stress the mutual relationship between democracy and economic well-being and the fundamental contribution of both to lasting security.

In stressing this relationship we should recall that we already have the machinery for helping to advance democracy.

The Office for Free Elections which we created for this purpose can help to ensure that the will of the people, the only possible basis for legitimate government, is respected.

EUROPEAN SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

If the *foundation* of European security is democracy and economic well-being, its *architecture* is a complex supported by European and North American pillars.

This new architecture thus embraces all the countries of Europe and North America and all the issues that affect and contribute to their security.

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is uniquely placed to provide the comprehensive, and pan-European and transatlantic framework to assure co-operative security for all its participating states.

Human rights, economic liberty, migration, social justice and equal security are all facets of a single stone.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY MODEL OF SECURITY-BUILDING

The CSCE, with its comprehensive scope and mandate, recognizes that security and democratic values are indissolubly connected.

Security can no longer be defined in strictly traditional military terms. Challenges to security increasingly come in more diverse forms: economic underdevelopment, environmental degradation, political oppression, to mention a few.

While the CSCE is the framework, it cannot by itself assure European security.

A transformed NATO, with its enduring North American commitment to European security, continues to be a key factor in Europe's security and stability.

The broader interdependence of Europe is complemented, moreover, by an inner European political and economic integration through the European Community.

But we must all be committed to making the CSCE work, whether we are part of other networks or not.

Let us then, while we are in Berlin, work to ensure that the CSCE will meet the real needs and concerns that contribute to European security.

This will also require far more effective meetings of officials than this organization has had in the past. Over-emphasis on procedure, form and magnified detail is not on any more and must now cede to real issues before us.

CONFLICT PREVENTION

At Paris we created a conflict prevention function for the CSCE: we established a Conflict Prevention Centre as a mechanism to support this function.

In our view, the CSCE's conflict prevention function is embodied in the seamless political process that begins with regular meetings of Heads of Government, meetings of our Council and vigorous meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials.

It should be a flexible, co-operative security instrument that could, at the direction of the Council, assume a number of diverse functions.

We had hoped this meeting would be able to establish a mechanism for the convocation of emergency meetings.

Some appear worried about its potential application to difficult internal affairs without the consent of the country or countries concerned.

We must reassure our members and move ahead on the whole issue of conflict prevention. To do so, we need the political will to go right to the heart of our problems.

This is our primary challenge today -- our primary opportunity, if you will.

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: THE BIGGER PICTURE

We must also recall that we are members of a broader international community.

That is why this meeting should also take a look at our world beyond the CSCE area, and at the implications for our security of events elsewhere.

LESSONS OF THE GULF WAR: ARMS

The Gulf War had lessons we ignore at our peril and that of future generations who will some day sit where we are today.

We must never again allow a state to become an over-armed menace to peace and security.

Many states represented here today contributed to the arming of Iraq. That war was devastating within its region.

Our publics had a good look at just what the implications are for uncontrolled arms sales. In ancient times this would have been seen as a sign from God -- and perhaps it was. In any case, it is a sign that we, as democratically elected leaders, cannot ignore. We have a responsibility to our publics to ensure that such a menace does not arise again.

Our publics see the end of the Cold War. They welcome the progress made in the conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE) negotiations. They see the reductions in our arsenals.

However, they emphatically do not want these weapons simply transferred to an up-and-coming version of Saddam Hussein somewhere.

I am not suggesting we negotiate at this meeting an arms control resolution.

What I am suggesting is that we send a message telling our publics -- as well as aspiring adventurers -- that the massive accumulation of arms is no longer on.

Let me emphasize here, I am not being naive.

Of course, countries have the right to arm themselves adequately and to manufacture and sell military equipment.

That is not what we are talking about. We are talking about preventing the creation of hugely disproportionate military imbalances, imbalances that threaten peace, imperil lives and divert enormous sums of money from other pressing problems -- economic assistance, for example.

CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS

The negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe, carried out within the framework of the objectives and purposes of the CSCE, have enabled countries to begin reducing their conventional arms inventories in meaningful ways.

However, the problem of arms transfers, excess production capacity and absence of transparency in the arms trade remain.

In our minds there are some issues that, because of their overriding importance and urgency, should be considered by this council and should, preferably, be the subject of a political declaration. This is one of them.

Recently I had the pleasure of attending the General Assembly of the Organization of American States -- where, for the first time, all 34 nations in attendance were represented by democratic governments. This organization, which looks to Europe for leadership, expressed itself on this subject in a resolution.

Here in this forum, I am gratified by the very welcome support you have given our efforts, as expressed by Austria.

A political commitment concerning the issue of conventional arms transfers would be consonant with the commitments we have made in the Helsinki Final Act and other CSCE documents.

A DECLARATION ON ARMS TRANSFERS

I believe we all agree that this meeting in Berlin provides a timely and appropriate opportunity for us to make a political declaration on arms transfers.

I am confident we all recognize the importance of the issue and its relevance for CSCE countries.

States which are party to the CFE agreement have a special responsibility not to contribute, by transfer of armaments, to excessive build-ups of conventional arms outside the CFE area of application.

We also need to encourage transparency in conventional arms transfers.

Now is the time to commit CSCE governments to serious, forward looking discussion of these issues.

I fervently hope that these points will command a consensus and be included in a summary of the results of this meeting.

STRENGTHENING THE UN

The other major lesson of the Gulf War is that if we strengthen the capacity of the UN to respond to breaches of security more effectively, in the future, we shall render such breaches less likely.

We must all become multilateralists and recognize that security is indivisible.

We must design a new security framework which, because of its diversity and flexibility, is able to meet the needs of our

countries with whatever structures are necessary. But we do not need to duplicate other frameworks such as those of the UN.

A GLOBAL SECURITY SYSTEM

The framework can begin with the CSCE or CSCE-like processes that would then contribute to the existence of a wide range of complementary arrangements.

We must build on a regional level in a developmental, co-operative and preventive manner.

We must also build on a global level, through the UN, in pursuit of the rule of law.

Our task here, as part of this process, is to ensure a foundation for ongoing dialogue, co-operation and tangible investments.

CONCLUSION

As a final observation, I return to the democratic ideals we share and which anchor our common community of values.

These are the real pillars of our security.

Their existence also gives us some confidence that we can address the problems we face in ways that do contribute to security.

Our ability to deliver on the promise of our new found community of values will depend on political will and on action to back it up.

This meeting must transform rhetoric into substance and take decisions that will lead us forward together. I have discussed two such decisions. Let us move forward on these and others.