



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION -- II

Statement in Helsinki on April 25, 1973, by the Canadian
Ambassador to Finland, Mr. E.A. Côté.

Our meeting this morning follows a period of reflection which has enabled us to assess both the progress made and the work yet to be done before the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe can be called.

Our consultations so far lead me to believe that in Stage Four we shall be able to reach agreement on an agenda for the Conference, on the directives our ministers will give to the committees and sub-committees for their guidance during the conference, and on the organization and financing of the conference.

We believe that the main objective in this stage of our consultations is to agree on an agenda for the conference and on the directives to the committees and sub-committees. In our opinion, these directives and this agenda should be flexible and detailed enough to allow for a thorough examination of the questions the participating nations consider relevant to increased security and co-operation in Europe.

It is our firm conviction that a climate of *détente* in Europe can be achieved only through conscious effort on the part of the leaders and citizens in the various countries. We believe that, within the context of the laws of these countries and in conformity with universally-acknowledged tenets of human rights, there should be increasing and progressively freer exchanges of ideas and human contacts. It is well known that Canada is most anxious that the conference be able to discuss measures to be taken on a multilateral and gradual basis in order to reduce tension, fear and suspicion. Without wishing to depreciate in any way the value of official contacts between countries and formally-constituted organizations, we think that any discussions tending towards the uniting of families separated by national borders, any deliberations aimed at promoting better understanding among the citizens of different countries, and any measures favouring more widespread dissemination of information, can only serve the cause of increased understanding among men and *détente* among nations.

For these reasons we consider that the working group should apply itself resolutely to the problems remaining in the third category. Solving these problems to the satisfaction of all concerned will greatly contribute to the accomplishment of one of the major tasks we must face during the fourth stage in our consultations.

I should like to make one comment concerning the work to be undertaken this afternoon by the working group on finance and technical questions, following the happy initiative of our Polish colleague. I think we should bear in mind that, whatever decisions are taken for the organization of the conference itself, the expenses involved will be relatively great. In my view, it is therefore advisable for the group to seek a solution which will be the simplest possible, both in theory and in practice, and which will be fair to all participating nations.

As to the date of the conference itself, my country sees no objection to holding the first stage in late June, provided we reach general agreement here on the agenda and the terms of reference for the committees and sub-committees, and on the report to be conveyed to our governments. For our part, we shall attempt to achieve this objective constructively and actively, as our resources permit. In aiming for late June as the conference date, we must avoid making this deadline into an obsession or using it to force a consensus.

In conclusion, I think that the "scenario" proposed by our French colleague at the end of Stage Three of our consultations will serve admirably as a framework for the final report to our governments. We trust that the report will be prepared as soon and as well as possible, subject to the wishes of all participants.