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CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
HELSINKI FOLLOW-UP MEETING
MARCH - JUNE 1992

Communication of the Commission to the Council

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I. Introduction

1. The fourth CSCE follow-up meeting (after Belgrade 1977/78, Madrid 1980-83 and Vienna 1986-89) will be held in Helsinki, starting on March 24, 1992. It is scheduled to last for three months. The meeting will, according to the Paris Charter, "allow the participating States to take stock of developments, review the implementation of their commitments and consider further steps in the CSCE process". The conference is likely to be opened by Foreign Ministers and will conclude with a Summit in early July.
2. It will be the first occasion after the Paris Summit of November 1990 for the CSCE to undertake a global appreciation of the fundamental changes which have occurred since 1989/90 in central and eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. Helsinki will consider ways and means by which the economic and political reforms underway can be accelerated.
3. Recent changes in Europe demonstrate the need for a new approach in substantive areas of cooperation as well as effective decision-making in CSCE institutions, notably the Council, supported by the Committee of Senior Officials. The operational capability of the CSCE should be reinforced and a clear division of responsibility established between the CSCE Secretariat in Prague, the Conflict Prevention Centre in Vienna, the Office of Free Elections in Warsaw and related CSCE bodies.
4. The Community's goal in the preparations for the follow-up meeting next March should be to encourage the Helsinki process to develop in a manner which is conducive to overall European security and compatible with the Community's growing external responsibilities, particularly with regard to the countries of central and eastern Europe. To achieve this objective, a cohesive Community approach in the preparations for Helsinki and at the meeting itself is essential.

II. From Vienna to Helsinki

1. Helsinki will build on thirteen intersessional events since the Vienna CSCE in January 1989, most of which have achieved far-reaching results. The Charter of Paris confirms previous commitments, provides new guidelines and establishes new CSCE structures and institutions. These institutions are already contributing at the political level to preparations for Helsinki.
2. In the economic sphere, three intersessional meetings have taken place: the Sofia meeting on the protection of the environment in autumn 1989, the Bonn conference on economic cooperation in Europe in spring 1990 and the Palma de Majorca meeting on the Mediterranean in autumn 1990.

3. In Bonn, the participating States committed themselves to multiparty democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and the introduction of market economies. These principles, which are highly political in nature, became an integral part of the Paris Charter and are an essential point of reference for subsequent work in the CSCE. Participating States acknowledged the link between political pluralism and market economies and recognised that democracy and economic freedom foster economic and social progress. They also noted that international economic cooperation and domestic reform were interdependent and that more competitive conditions would enable reforming countries to participate to a greater extent in the international economic and financial system.
4. The Bonn conclusions update those resulting from Vienna and reflect changes in central and eastern Europe in 1990. The Bonn agenda covered most of the essential basket II areas: business conditions, economic information, small and medium sized enterprises, industrial cooperation, property rights, economic policies, energy, environment, investment and monetary and financial questions. The Bonn document is geared to the transition of centrally planned states to market economies and confirms the willingness of participating states to support this process. It establishes criteria which will be the basis for consideration in Helsinki of possible common action.

III. Helsinki and the Community

1. The Helsinki meeting is an important opportunity for the Community to deploy the extensive experience which it has acquired over the past two years in co-operating closely with the countries of central and eastern Europe, through the PHARE programme, G-24 coordination, trade and cooperation agreements and the new European agreements. The meeting takes place at a time when the political influence of the Community in the CSCE has increased through its place in the political consultation process established by the Paris Summit. The Community's efforts to resolve the crisis in Yugoslavia, with the support of the CSCE, have further underlined its role in this process.
2. Helsinki will evaluate the extent to which the CSCE is able to promote peace, stability and human rights and stimulate cooperation. 1990 was marked by a certain euphoria which made the Bonn conference and the Copenhagen conference on the human dimension so successful. This momentum was maintained in the preparation of the Paris Charter. But more recent intersessional events, Valletta, Cracow, Geneva and Moscow and the Berlin Council, have seen a certain ambiguity over CSCE commitments. This must be overcome if the expectations raised by the Paris Charter are to be realised.

3. The Community has high stakes in all aspects of the Helsinki Final Act. The European Council in Dublin in June 1990 noted:

"The European Council reaffirms the important role played by the CSCE in the process of change in Europe. At a time when our continent is actively engaged in surmounting its divisions, the CSCE provides a necessary framework for maintaining stability and promoting cooperation in Europe and for deepening the reforms that are underway. It attaches great importance to the comprehensive nature of the CSCE process which brings together the peoples and governments of Europe, the United States and Canada".

It also noted that:

"The European Community and its Member States intend to assume a leading role in this enterprise and to contribute actively to all discussions within the CSCE process. Considering the importance of the Paris Summit, the European Council has agreed that the Community and its Member States will strengthen their coordination with a view to defining and expressing a common position on all questions, in the various sectors of the CSCE, in which they have an essential common interest, and taking into account the importance of coordination with the participating States and organisations".

This approach furthers the goals of the Single European Act, according to which the Community will endeavour to take common positions in international institutions and conferences. Community cohesion is of particular significance at a time when the Community is striving for political union.

IV. Preparation for Helsinki

Most CSCE participating States expect the Community to take a prominent part in the discussions in Helsinki as one of the parties most active in the reconstruction of central and eastern Europe. Others, however, are still hesitant about the Community's role in the CSCE. This makes it important for the Community and its Member States to put forward clear, coordinated positions in preparation for Helsinki.

Implementation of CSCE commitments

The commitments subscribed to by participating States since Vienna and, especially, in the Bonn conclusions and the Paris Charter, notably in areas concerning economic cooperation, are now so extensive that emphasis should be placed on implementation rather than new commitments. The Community has contributed significantly to implementation through its support for reforming countries. This should be given a prominent place in discussions in Helsinki. As CSCE commitments are based on the experience of countries with traditions of democracy and a market economy, the review of implementation in Helsinki will tend to focus on the situation in central and eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and its republics. The implementation debate should not simply be a monitoring device, as in the past, but also the occasion for the exchange of experiences.

Further development of cooperation

1. Among the areas where cooperation is developing and could be given renewed impetus at Helsinki are: science and technology, telecommunications, environment, transport, human resources and migration.
2. Science and technology is an area where cooperation is developing rapidly throughout Europe. Certain Community research programmes have been opened up, for example, to participants from central and eastern Europe. At Helsinki, it would be useful for participating States to reaffirm their commitment to the further development of cooperation in this area.
3. In telecommunications, where the Community is actively promoting trans-European initiatives, priorities include, notably, the development of an integrated European telecommunications market and of institutional and regulatory reform to foster the development of a network infrastructure.
4. Trans-boundary cooperation on the protection of the environment has become increasingly important given environmental damage in central and eastern Europe and the importance of environmental considerations in economic reconstruction. The Community is contributing to a new framework convention on environmental standards, inspired by the CSCE conferences on the environment. To ensure complementarity, the CSCE should concentrate on providing political support for environmental protection.
5. An important incentive for closer cooperation in transport was given by the Pan-European Transport Conference (Prague 1991). The development of an efficient all European transport system is an important task, being fostered, inter alia, by Community initiatives. Cooperation in the CSCE should concentrate on defining the principles of such a system and on increasing the efficiency of transport by improving infrastructures, reducing environmental repercussions and increasing safety.

6. The development of human resources is one of the essential elements and objectives of cooperation with central and eastern Europe. To this end, the Community has developed several programmes on both education and vocational training. These programmes aim at raising the level of education and of professional skills and qualifications of management and the labour force. In Helsinki, the participating States should provide for strengthened cooperation in this area, taking into account Community initiatives.
7. Although, hitherto, the CSCE has not dealt explicitly with migration, the Paris Charter refers to the free movement of people and the question will inevitably be raised at Helsinki. Community assistance within the PHARE and G-24 frameworks is focused on economic reconstruction, which should diminish the propensity to migrate. Concern is increasing, however, as expressed at the western economic summit in London in July 1991, and it is desirable for the Community and its Member States to prepare thoroughly for this discussion at Helsinki.
8. Other areas of existing cooperation which will be the subject of discussion in Helsinki and where, consequently, the Community and its Member States should prepare their positions in advance, include energy, economic and regional cooperation, human rights, information and culture.
9. The European Energy Charter is a follow-up of CSCE recommendations in the energy field. To avoid duplication, no new initiatives need be taken in Helsinki. However, the CSCE should support the development and implementation of the Charter. It should also confirm that cooperation in energy takes place within the framework of a market economy and that safety standards, modernization of equipment and diversification of supply require international cooperation.
10. Beyond the above areas, economic cooperation should be developed in such fields as: business, overcoming trade obstacles, economic and commercial information, services, marketing, competition policy, industrial cooperation, standardization and arbitration, tourism, the problems of migrant workers, education and vocational training, economic and financial questions and investment. Initiatives at Helsinki in these areas should build on existing CSCE commitments and developments since Bonn, including new Community links with reforming countries and the Uruguay Round negotiations.
11. Cooperation between regions in different parts of Europe is developing. This form of cooperation responds to various needs, allowing regions to tackle their specific problems together, and may be raised in Helsinki. The Community should be ready to contribute to discussion in this area, in view of its particular expertise.

12. Non-economic issues which will come up at Helsinki include human rights, information and culture. These subjects have been in the forefront of CSCE activities since Vienna and cannot be separated from economic issues, particularly at a time when there is a growing consensus in the Community that an approach based on separate "Baskets" is less useful today since all subjects are now inter-related. Recent events in Europe have shown that human rights, democracy, the rule of law, material well-being, security and stability are linked. The Community is necessarily involved in many of these areas through the political conditionality attached to the Europe agreements and to coordinated assistance from the Group of Twenty Four and therefore adequate preparation in these areas is necessary.

Cooperation in the Mediterranean

13. Cooperation in the Mediterranean will be an important theme for debate in Helsinki. The Community's geographic position and its new Mediterranean policy give it a particular interest in cooperation in this area. In suggesting an approach to Mediterranean cooperation for Helsinki, the Community should stress the need to narrow the gap between certain Mediterranean countries and their European neighbours and to bring all Mediterranean countries more actively into the work of the CSCE on problems in the region.

V. Institutional considerations

The further development of CSCE institutions (notably the Secretariat, the Conflict Prevention Centre and the Office for Free Elections), to cover new spheres of activity will be reviewed in Helsinki. These institutions as well as the Council supported by the Committee of Senior Officials will make an essential contribution to the work of the CSCE. The Community's priority should be to ensure that the institutions charged with implementing CSCE commitments function effectively rather than to create new institutions. This approach is likely to be supported by most participating states.

VI. Follow up to Helsinki

The Helsinki CSCE will consider the necessary follow-up. One of the means for following up political orientations has been CSCE intersessional meetings. These will continue to be useful although their scale and content should be carefully considered to ensure their effectiveness. The other traditional approach has been to recommend to economic organisations that they include CSCE conclusions in their work programme; this should be extended to ad-hoc conferences. The Council and the Committee of Senior Officials through their regular political consultations will also play a full part in the follow-up to Helsinki.

The Bonn conclusions of Spring 1990 referred in particular to the need for "coordination among the different existing international economic institutions to avoid duplication and to ensure the maximum effectiveness of their work". Institutions, such as UN/ECE and OECD, have specific responsibilities in relation to economies in transition. But the extent and the diversity of relations established by the Community with those countries, notably through the Group of Twenty-Four and bilateral links, have given the Commission valuable experience in coordinating economic assistance in Europe and, through its initiatives, it will make an important contribution to the follow-up to Helsinki.

VII. Conclusion

The Community should adopt common positions, on the basis of these orientations in time for the CSCE Council in January 1992, in order to present to participating States the key elements of the Community approach to the Helsinki Meeting on that occasion.