



CSCE Testimonies

Causes and Consequences of the Helsinki Final Act
1972–1989



CSCE Oral History Project 2013

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**Causes and Consequences of
the Helsinki Final Act
1972–1989**



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1. Simplified map of European military alliances during the cold war.

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FOREWORD

The OSCE Prague Office is one of the oldest and smallest parts of the Organization, with the beginning of its story at the Paris Summit of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in 1990 and a decision to institutionalize the CSCE. Following this decision, the CSCE Secretariat was established in Prague. In 1994, the Secretariat was moved to Vienna, while the Prague Office, besides other tasks, has remained the official CSCE/OSCE historical archives and documentation centre supporting, preserving, enhancing and making available the institutional memory of the OSCE ever since.

In line with this mandate and in view of the upcoming 40th anniversary of the CSCE/OSCE, I consider this Oral Memory Project to be a contribution to the broad debate on the historical role the OSCE played in the development of more secure environment in the world. All the interviewees in this collection recognized that the 1975 Helsinki Decalogue was a product of the Cold War. Nevertheless, we believe that its values are still valid and current, as is richly documented in the CSCE/OSCE historical archives stored in Prague.

However, this project was designed to do more than build on the historical records of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that are kept in the CSCE/OSCE archives at our Prague Office. I believe that the *CSCE Testimonies* will facilitate easier access to information about the origin of the OSCE's guiding principles, bringing their definition and interpretation further into the public sphere.

I hope that this book of interviews will provide enough food for thought for the research community and inspire the dialogue about the contents of the publication and its message for the ongoing evolutionary process towards the vision of a security community.

This publication was made possible by the generous financial support of the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the OSCE and of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the OSCE. Furthermore, I would like to thank all the protagonists and institutions involved in the development of this programme.

Ambassador Jiří Parkmann
Head of the Prague Office
of the OSCE Secretariat



INTRODUCTION BY THE OSCE SECRETARY GENERAL

In 2015, we will mark the fortieth anniversary of the *Helsinki Final Act* and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Charter of Paris for a New Europe*. These two documents have framed the security architecture of Europe in the post-war era and provide the foundation for peace and stability throughout the region.

When looking forward, it is important to remember where we have come from and what lessons we have learned from the past. Thus I warmly welcome this oral history of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and its institutional successor, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The CSCE/OSCE made a substantial contribution to building peace in a deeply polarized world in which an atmosphere of hostility and mistrust prevailed. It was a catalyst for profound changes in East-West relations, and was instrumental in fostering security cooperation in the transition process following the Cold War. By giving a voice to those who actively contributed to this historic confidence-building process, this oral history offers an opportunity to better understand and reflect on our past, and a point of departure for considering the future direction of our work.

Today's OSCE is the result of an evolutionary process: Through the years, the CSCE transformed itself into a permanent intergovernmental forum in which States could improve their security through cooperative dialogue that would boost mutual trust. Yet in many ways, the OSCE continues to be a process that builds upon the efforts of many dedicated individuals over the past four decades, including government officials of many participating States who have been meeting under CSCE/OSCE auspices and pushing the process forward. But I am also thinking of all the committed professionals who have steadfastly supported these efforts while serving in the OSCE Secretariat, institutions and field operations. Moreover, the role of civil society actors, working in their own right or in the context of OSCE projects, is of paramount importance in our common success. Experts working in academia and think tanks have also made an enormous contribution to stimulating our debate and providing food for thought for our participating States.

Sometimes people focus on the OSCE through some of its better known activities, such as election monitoring. But the OSCE has played a no less important role in activities relating to the prevention of inter-ethnic conflict, disarmament, arms control, the development of confidence- and security-building measures, action to combat transnational threats, issues affecting national minorities, promotion of the rule of law and democratic institutions, freedom of the media, good governance and cooperation in economic and environmental matters.

One of the Organization's strengths is its ability to respond to the changing security environment and update its toolbox so as to be better prepared to address our common

security challenges. The signing of the *Helsinki Final Act* on 1 August 1975 reflected a high-level historic *rapprochement* between the nations of the East and the West. Thirty-five Heads of State committed themselves to mutually beneficial dialogue. East and West were still divided, but mutual understanding was much greater; human rights issues were on the table; and a forum for permanent dialogue on security – the CSCE – had been created. For a decade and a half after the signing of the *Helsinki Final Act*, the CSCE served as a privileged forum for dialogue and a catalyst for change, and formed a vital bridge between the two sides of what was still an ideologically, politically and economically divided Europe.

The historic changes at the end of the 1980s, to a certain extent, took everyone by surprise. As regime after regime crumbled, it was easy to get carried away by the seemingly universal atmosphere of optimism. The “end of history” was confidently predicted. However, many old tensions and rivalries – ethnic, political and geographical – bubbled to the surface in the OSCE region. Despite all the praiseworthy efforts, a number of bloody conflicts flared up in the subsequent few years. Against this backdrop, it was immediately clear that the framework for cooperation provided by Helsinki was no longer sufficient to ensure long-term regional stability. The CSCE was called upon to quickly modernize itself to meet the security challenges of the new Europe. In 1990, the Heads of State and Government gathered in Paris to lay the groundwork for the transformation of the CSCE from a diplomatic conference into a full-fledged organization dedicated to the promotion of security and cooperation in Europe. Consequently, in the following years, the OSCE developed a range of institutions, specialized units in the Secretariat and field operations. By the end of the 1990s, these field missions had greatly contributed to increased security and stability in many parts of Europe. As the new millennium began, the OSCE again had reasons to be optimistic: Its conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution measures had proven largely successful, bringing peace and stability to most of Europe. However, the horrific terrorist attacks of 2001 showed that the world now faced security problems that were completely new and more complex than ever before. Once again, the OSCE adapted rapidly to deal with new threats to security and developed expertise in policing and the areas of combating of trafficking and terrorism, while also looking at issues like border management, intolerance and discrimination.

The war in the South Caucasus in August 2008 was a sharp reminder that unresolved conflicts in the OSCE area continued to threaten collective security, and underscored the urgent need to address new and existing threats. In response, in 2009, the OSCE initiated the Corfu Process to rebuild trust between States and revitalize the dialogue on Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. The Corfu Process discussions laid the groundwork for the 2010 Astana Commemorative Declaration, in which the Heads of State and Government renewed their commitment to pursue the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community, stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Today, as we move toward the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the *Helsinki Final Act*, engaging in a strategic dialogue within the Helsinki+40 process, the participating States are continuing to work toward strengthening the OSCE’s contribution to the building of a common security community. We will need to ensure that narrow interests do not prevail over shared ones. Only through joint efforts and the political

will of all the participating States can the capacity of the OSCE to address existing and new security challenges be further enhanced. As we intensify our debate aimed at bridging and overcoming differences in the assessment of our common security threats, the OSCE has confirmed its role as a key regional security actor, thanks to its inclusive membership, comprehensive mandate and rich toolbox, including specialized institutions and a network of field operations.

This oral history of the CSCE/OSCE makes a concrete contribution to the wider debate about the OSCE's role in realizing the vision articulated by the participating States at the Astana Summit in 2010. It is also an important contribution to the preservation of the CSCE/OSCE institutional memory, and it will help to raise awareness and increase understanding of the OSCE, its origins and the fundamental tenets of its *acquis* of agreed norms and commitments. Since the beginning of my mandate as Secretary General, I have made raising the OSCE's profile one of my top priorities. I am therefore hopeful that this publication will promote interest in the work of the Organization across the three dimensions of security and throughout the OSCE region. Ultimately, we are an Organization based upon common values built up over time, and this project is intended to shed light on how we have come this far. All those who generously gave of their time in support of this project, providing valuable insights and recollections, deserve our sincere gratitude.

Lamberto Zannier
OSCE Secretary General
Vienna, spring 2013



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The breadth and scope of a project may be tributary to the financial support it receives, but its success and quality more often depend on the care and dedication of those who work behind the scenes. We would, therefore, like to further express our gratitude and appreciation to a number of colleagues, partners and associates who either worked on parts or assisted with the entire realization of this book. Among those who helped us to capture and record the actual testimonies, we would like to thank Professor Andrei Žagorsky for conducting the interview with Ambassador Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin, and Mr. Nikolay Borovskiy, Chief of the OSCE Language Services Section, for arranging quality translation of this contribution. We also owe Ms. Kristin Kretschmar many thanks for the interview she conducted with Ambassador Peter Steglich. Our thanks go also to Ms. Monica Ercolani for having interviewed Ambassador Mario M. Alessi.

We would like to express our indebtedness to Professor Victor-Yves Ghebali for having once again sustained CSCE’s institutional memory by interviewing Ambassador Edouard Brunner, thereby enabling us to include this outstanding CSCE key player in our book. In relation to this particular testimony, we would also like to thank the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva for granting us permission to translate and reproduce parts of the original interview with Ambassador Brunner, first published in 2003 in the framework of the Program for the Study of International Organizations (PSIO), Occasional Paper No 2/2003.

With reference to the preparation and research involved in the making of this compilation, we would like to remember and mention Ms. Sini Rämö, who helped us to locate illustrations from an amazing array of sources, and also Ms. Vendula Krumpholcová, who assisted with the project administration. We are grateful to Mr. James Drake for his edits and annotations, as well as ensuring continuity between the transcripts. Dr. Catherine Hecht’s insightful feedback, helpful and encouraging comments also merit our warm thanks.

CONTEXT Praha Ltd, (translation and word processing services), has been one of our most valuable partners, as it took great care in hiring typists who could transcribe the spoken word we had captured into five different languages and translators to convert it into English. Once we had assembled all the written and visual materials for the publication, we had reached the last practical hurdle: giving the collection the shape and all the attributes of a book. For this we would like to thank HQ Kontakt Ltd (Publishers), Czech Republic.

Prague, summer 2013

CSCCE Testimonies



2.



Ambassador Jaakko Iloniemi of Finland

The first time I was personally approached about getting involved in the CSCE process was in June 1972. At that time, I was a Minister Counsellor¹ in our UN mission in New York. I had been sent there a year before, and it had been agreed that I would be working at the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)² for a period of three years. And then, all of a sudden, in June 1972, our Foreign Minister at the time, Kalevi Sorsa³, called me up in New York and told me: "We are planning to create a group to prepare a European security conference and I want you to join it!" I had known Sorsa for several years before he became a public figure and a high-ranking politician, so I responded quite honestly: "I don't think it's a very good idea because I have only been here for a year, and since my initial appointment was to deal with ECOSOC matters and I haven't finished this job yet, I'm not sure that I am the best choice." He said: "Well, think it over anyhow!" I said: "All right, I'll think it over, but frankly I'm not really inclined to come."

A week later, he phoned back again: "So? Have you thought it over yet?" I answered: "Yes, I have thought it through at length, and all things considered, I prefer to stay here." To which he responded: "Oh no, you don't! You are coming back to Helsinki."

¹ In bilateral diplomacy, a minister counsellor usually ranks two steps below an ambassador heading a delegation.

² The United Nations Economic and Social Council is a UN Charter body established in 1946. It is a platform where economic, social and environmental issues are discussed, and policy recommendations issued.

³ Taisto Kalevi Sorsa (1930–2004) served as Prime Minister of Finland four times: 1972–1975, 1977–1979, 1982–1983 and 1983–1987.

So I said: “If that’s an order, then I assume that I am duty-bound to come back.” This he confirmed: “An order it is – and we’ll see you soon back home.”

So I returned to Finland shortly afterwards. I joined a small group that had already started on the preparations, and we had a few months ahead of us during the summer before the event was scheduled to take place. While half of us were planning and preparing the administrative and logistical side of what was being dubbed as an “ambassadors’ tea party”, the other half were busy doing the political background research and making the preparations. I was in charge of the political preparatory work.

So this “ambassadors’ tea party” was to be the preparatory phase for what was to be the European security conference, which Minister Sorsa was referring to in June 1972? Managing a guest list of 35 States for such party on such short notice must not have been an easy task.

Well the idea of holding such a conference had taken shape well before 1972. What we did during the weeks preceding the consultation was basically to follow up on the efforts Ambassador Ralph Enckell had deployed several years before, when he travelled extensively around Europe to lay the groundwork for these discussions.⁴

It is true that the circumstances of these beginnings were quite peculiar. In the autumn of 1972, when I arrived, there were no offices available on the premises of the Foreign Ministry, so we established our offices in a hotel located in the centre of Helsinki. We made ourselves available to the heads of diplomatic missions in Helsinki for the purpose of consultations on what would be involved in a possible assembly of Helsinki ambassadors. The reason why it was done in such an oblique way was to stress that this did not constitute a commitment to any kind of conference. Rather, the local ambassadors would discuss among themselves the possibility of something that might emerge in the future, which ideally would involve the lowest conceivable level of commitment.

This was an especially important aspect of our approach towards the Western European ambassadors, because many of their governments had qualms about the nature of our project. Some of them were more outspoken about these qualms than others, saying that this was just an old idea that the Soviets⁵ had proposed before, but which the Finns were willing to help bring to life.

Soon, however, it became obvious that only a few of the local ambassadors knew much about the protocol of multilateral international meetings, or the kind of matters that could be at the back of the minds of some of the participants. While many might have been perfectly capable of managing bilateral affairs in their ambassadorial capacity, they were often ill at ease when engaging in politically sensitive negotiations concerning substantive matters set in a multilateral context and upon which only their respective ministries could decide.

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⁴ Ambassador Carl Ralph Enckell (1913–2001) represented the Government of Finland at the United Nations in New York (1959–1965) and served as Ambassador to Sweden (1965–1969), France (1969–1976) and Poland (1976–1979). While in Paris, he also represented Finland at the OECD (1962–1967) and at the UNESCO (1972–1976). Between

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⁴ 1971 and 1972, Ambassador Enckell made some 50 trips to various capitals in Europe and North America in order to clarify the positions of the different countries with a view to holding a pan-European security conference.

⁵ Also see the interview with Yuri Dubinin, chapter VIII.

So, very soon, as we got into our preparations, we noticed that senior staff from various foreign ministries were being flown to Helsinki to provide the expertise that their local ambassadors lacked. And that was also one of the reasons for my coming into contact with the CSCE, as multilateral diplomacy was my area of expertise. I knew that I had been called upon because I had worked in the United Nations and knew how the UN system functioned, and so it was thought I could handle the multilateral aspect of this gathering.

Another factor was of course that our Foreign Minister knew me personally, so I think my presence was a kind of reassurance for him – having a person on the spot to report to him directly on a confidential basis. In this way, he knew from a trusted source who was doing what.

Looking back, and knowing what you know today, how would you say that the idea of holding a conference on security in Finland arose?

If you were to read what various historians have to say on this question, you might find different explanations for the same facts. Nevertheless, my personal interpretation is that, in 1969, Finland found itself under heavy pressure from the Soviet Union to recognize the German Democratic Republic. So, the Finnish Foreign Ministry had to find a way of *not* doing so because it would have spoiled our relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany. You may remember that, in 1969, the Soviet Union had proposed the convening of a European conference for the second time⁶. As a matter of fact, Molotov had done so first in 1959⁷, but that had been a non-starter from the very beginning and so was the Soviet initiative in 1969.

But this time we thought that if we modified the proposal and took it over as our own, we could use it as an instrument for not recognizing the German Democratic Republic. Under this scenario, it could be claimed that we had only non-diplomatic relations with both German States – that we had trade representations but not real embassies in them (even though they were, of course, embassies in practical terms, but not in terms of protocol). So, as long as we had a process of this kind going on, we could postpone the issue of the recognition of the German Democratic Republic and adopt a “wait and see” attitude.

At the turn of 1969 and 1970, very few people believed that this prospect would ever lead to a real conference on European security. Others thought that this could be a means of buying time for Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik*. And if Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* led to a settlement in the relationship with both German States, then we’d be off the

6 The March 1969 “Budapest Declaration” of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee called for the convening of “a conference of European states to discuss measures to ensure collective security in Europe”.

7 At the 1954 Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers (the USSR, the USA, France and the United Kingdom), the Soviet Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, proposed a pan-European collective security treaty as

an alternative to Western plans for a European Defence Community (EDC) involving the participation of a rearmed West Germany. Molotov’s collective security proposal was rejected by Western representatives on two grounds: firstly, because the United States was excluded and relegated (together with Communist China) to observer status; and secondly, because it was alleged that the Soviet proposal was aimed at disrupting NATO, as well as halting the formation of the EDC.

hook – that is to say, regardless of whether there was a conference, at least that issue would have been resolved.

Now, more interest in staging the Conference slowly emerged, even among those who had at first been rather reluctant or suspicious of it – and some were very suspicious for a very long time, especially the United States. At the time, there was no enthusiasm for the whole venture in the US. If you read the memoirs of Henry Kissinger, you will note that, in the first volume, he is rather dubious about the whole thing, and then in the third volume he says how wonderful the Conference is – a quite extreme change of mind from one volume to another. While I find that a bit disingenuous, I suppose this was the way he really saw it.

So, from the Finnish point of view, the original trigger for the whole process was the desire to avoid recognizing the GDR. It was easier in the sense that we were not members of NATO – that was one factor. And, of course, it would also have suited us if the Swedes had taken the same position, and perhaps either the Austrians or the Swiss; but the Swedes or the Austrians or the Swiss did not have our problem, the GDR problem, so we had more of a motive for taking the initiative and advancing it. We also had a greater need for our policy of neutrality to be recognized, because some countries had serious misgivings about it, especially the Federal Republic, where they had coined the phrase “Finlandization” to insinuate that Finnish politics were less than neutral, that they had a clear pro-Soviet slant.

Was this not a stigma left over from the self-protective policy that Finland had followed in the post-war period?

Well, there were different periods after the war. I mean, Juho Kusti Paasikivi had had a much more difficult time of it, because he was Prime Minister from 1944 to 1946 and then President from 1946 to 1956, and for most of that period Stalin was still alive. By contrast, Urho Kekkonen was Finland’s President from 1956 until 1982, and in the course of those 26 years, not only did the international situation change drastically, but even the Russian way of seeing Finland altered significantly.

And then, of course, you always have to consider each State’s domestic political situation. This is, by the way, another often-underestimated aspect of international relations that students of political sciences tend to overlook. If you do not understand the close relationship between domestic affairs and the manner in which officials act on the international scene, you are missing a fundamental element in assessing any type of political situation.

So to better portray the domestic setting of our foreign policy in those years, I would like to put President Kekkonen’s personality under a magnifying glass and thereby clarify Finnish political behaviour in the early 1970s. Kekkonen was a very strong leader, and by this time, he had attained a position in which his leadership was virtually unchallenged. Within the domestic political context, he was unquestioned – well, unquestioned is maybe too strong a word, but his authority as President was certainly uncontested. Of course, he had his opponents, but from the political viewpoint there were no real alternatives or political visionaries who could bring forth new or better options.

So in his time, Kekkonen was more than a *primus inter pares* – he really was a strong leader, plus he had a broad and well-established base of domestic political support. After all, as he said himself in his memoirs, one of the ways in which he left his mark on our country's history was the realization of his greatest and only real ambition: To make Finnish neutrality a cornerstone of Finland's political existence. Neutrality was the ultimate goal he could aim for in those days. Therefore, as he saw it, if our initiative to convene the CSCE proved successful, it would confirm and reinforce our neutrality; at the same time, it would boost the image of himself as the man who had made it possible, or who had made things happen.

A politician will frequently find himself in situations in which certain values are counterbalanced by others, and when he comes to evaluate the weight of one value against another, he will discover that such values are not only hard to measure, but that they can change, fluctuate and ultimately be bent, whereas before they had seemed unyielding.

Here we should also remember President Khrushchev – Nikita Sergeyeovich. For instance, he was very eager that foreign bases in Europe be liquidated. And that was also the reason why, in January 1956, he gave the order to liquidate the one and only Soviet military base in Finland, which was on the Porkkala peninsula, some 25 kilometres outside Helsinki. To Khrushchev, the recognition of Finland as a neutral country was crucial because it could then serve as a keystone in an effort to bring about *rapprochement* with the rest of Europe. The image of a healthy and recognized Finnish neutrality would demonstrate that there was no truth in the claim that the Soviet Union was exercising pressure against Finland. Thus, liquidating their base in Finland was one way for the Soviets to show that they were on the path towards a peaceful solution in Europe. Having liquidated this base on the Gulf of Finland, [Khrushchev] could then say that the Americans should do the same and liquidate their own foreign bases in the rest of Western Europe.

Now, a lot depended in the Soviet Union on what is sometimes called in German the *Großwetterlage*⁸ in Europe; Khrushchev himself often followed this ever-shifting political weather forecast when shaping Soviet foreign policy, for example, during the 1958-1961 Berlin crisis⁹. It seems absurd! Within this particular context, neutrality was for many of my compatriots a very important value, because it was precisely what associated us with such well-recognized neutral countries as Switzerland, Sweden and Austria. To be associated with them in one way or another helped our credibility. For these people, neutrality really meant an orientation towards – or being an integral part of – the established democracies in Western Europe. Then there were others for whom

⁸ In German, the term "*Großwetterlage*" is used in meteorological forecasts to introduce the "general weather situation".

⁹ In November 1958, Soviet Premier Khrushchev issued an ultimatum giving the Western powers six months to agree to withdraw from Berlin and make it a free, demilitarized city. In 1959, the Soviet Union withdrew its deadline and instead met with the Western powers in a Big Four Foreign Ministers' conference. Although the three-month-long talks failed to reach any important agreements, they did open the door to further negotiations and led to Khrushchev's visit

to the United States in September 1959. At the end of this visit, Khrushchev and President Dwight Eisenhower stated jointly that the most important issue in the world was general disarmament and that the problem of Berlin and "all outstanding international questions should be settled, not by the application of force, but by peaceful means through negotiations". But in June 1961, Premier Khrushchev created a new crisis over the status of West Berlin when he again threatened to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany which, he said, would end existing four-power agreements guaranteeing American, British, and French access rights to West Berlin.

neutrality meant not being affiliated with any military alliances (which is of course inherent in the notion of neutrality), but who would have preferred that Finnish officials listened more closely and took more to heart the Soviet viewpoint. This group happily listened to whatever the Soviets had to say in order to maintain a good relationship with them. Obviously, the further left you went, the more likely you were to come across that frame of mind, and naturally, such people exerted a certain degree of pressure in order to introduce some Soviet-friendly items into our agenda.

But for everyone in our delegation, the main question was: “How can we continue to stay on the captain’s bridge and steer the process once we are in Geneva?”

Chapter V of the Final Recommendations of the Helsinki (Dipoli) Consultations states that the Conference would take place in three stages: The first and third were to take place in Helsinki, whereas the second stage was to be held in Geneva. How did this “division of labour” come about?

I think that Switzerland’s reasons for getting involved in the process were threefold. The first was political: They thought that this was such an important event as a whole that it must at least in part be held in Switzerland. Geneva, after all, was the place where great European conferences were held. Then there was a business reason: They had just finished building a new conference centre (the *Centre International de Conférences de Genève*,¹⁰), and they were therefore in need of clients. Then there was the fact that the participating countries already had large representations in Geneva because of the United Nations. They had their own facilities and assorted staff right there on the spot. What’s more, the Germans pointed out very plainly that the distance from Geneva to Bonn was not as great as that from Helsinki to Bonn. So they argued that, geographically speaking, Geneva was a preferable venue for a longer gathering because people could go home during those periods when the conference was not in session. It is a fact that, during the hectic periods, we worked long hours and over weekends, but then there were also longer periods of recess. So, the centrality of Geneva became the third determining element.

In August 1973, when we started our negotiations in Geneva, there were high hopes. It was thought that, if this effort proved successful, it would constitute an important landmark. For Finland, the most important decision had already been taken. It had been agreed in the “Blue Book”¹¹ that both the first stage and the third stage would be in Helsinki. The only question still open was at what level the third stage would take place – at the highest political level or at the intermediate level? So in 1973, the Finnish viewpoint was still optimistic: Unless something went seriously wrong, it was in the bag, because we had already had assurances from the others that the process would take place in accordance with the agreed formula.



¹⁰ The Geneva International Conference Centre, inaugurated in 1973, was built by the Building Foundation for International Organizations (FIPOI), a statutory independent foundation created by the Swiss Confederation and the Canton of Geneva. It was to accommodate international conferences (other than those related to the UN) at governmental level.

The building is located not far from the *Palais des Nations* (UN building) and within walking distance of a number of other international organizations and permanent missions.

¹¹ Ambassador Iloniemi is referring to the Final Recommendations.

Was the average citizen in Helsinki aware of the significance of the preparations and negotiations taking place in the Finnish capital?

Very early on, the press devoted a good deal of attention to this and the political parties were interested in it, and even other organizations took an interest in what was going on. Everything was still very loose and we were very careful not to let slip to the public things that were still taking shape, because that could have been detrimental to the negotiations. So what the press had was mainly statements from individual participants without anybody really opening up about the substance of our negotiations. Some of the delegations felt that they had to feed something to their press, so they gave them generalities rather than specifics.

Even during the Dipoli stage, there was still pretty much a “closed door” policy towards the press. And that was necessary. Otherwise, it would have been very difficult to agree on anything.

Before November 1972, the public was oblivious to these preparations, as there was practically no media coverage. Those who were close enough – real experts as well as international politicians, and those attending in a journalistic or professional reporting capacity – would have known of the discussions that Ambassador Enckell had conducted on a bilateral basis in various places, but ordinary people had no reason to know and no opportunity to find out anything because nothing was made public before the beginning of the Dipoli talks.

But when the Dipoli consultations started, well, that was a major media event, because for the first time since World War II, the East and West and the neutrals were to be sitting around the same negotiating table. So one could say it was the beginning of a new phase in European diplomacy, in the sense that nothing of the kind had really been tried before.

Once the Final Recommendations were agreed upon in July 1973 and after the Conference resumed in Geneva, how did you ensure the information flow with your capital?

Naturally, each delegation was responsible for informing its capital of developments during the entire second stage in Geneva. We did a lot of that reporting by phone, mail and telex. Telex was the principal telecommunication medium that connected us to our capitals, as in those days there was no World Wide Web, no Internet and no cell phones. In a way, I found that the greater the number of staff that got involved in the exchange of information, the more the process was diluted. I remember that our telex was working both night and day at times. When we would get back from the negotiation hall at 3 a.m. and all of our staff had gone, I would simply type out and send our reports on our talks in the middle of the night to Helsinki, so that we could have our Foreign Ministry’s reactions the next day.

By protocol, in gatherings where it is expected that politically significant matters will come up on the agenda, most delegations will operate under instructions from their respective governments. However, in a process of this kind, such instructions very often remain rather general because the situation and issues at stake can change

from morning to evening or from one session to the next. There is no minister (or even senior civil servant) back home following what's going on in real time, minute by minute. So instructions have to be at the level of broad principles or general directions, and not concerning specific issues.

In this sense, it can be said that in our delegation we wrote our own instructions. We would send a message home asking: "Is it alright if we do this or propose that?" And normally, the answer was: "Yes, please go ahead!" We were not micromanaged from a distance and were even given a considerable degree of freedom to make decisions until it came to the more difficult and thorny parts.

Did the composition of your delegation in Geneva differ a lot from that in Dipoli?

When I was informed about my appointment as head of delegation to the Geneva talks, I had the privilege of taking anyone I wished from the Foreign Ministry to serve in the team. It's extremely rare that the head of a negotiating team gets to form his own team. But this gathering had such a high priority on the agenda that it was thought to be justified.

In addition to the core team that was present in Dipoli, I put forward the idea of having a historian on board. After all, Alexander the Great had a historian with him on all of his campaigns! And as it happened, a young man named Markku Reimaa, a doctor of political history, had just been recruited by the Foreign Ministry, so we asked him to join the team for this campaign and keep the notes of these historic proceedings. Note-takers need to have a very profound understanding of what is worth writing down. Indeed, I have often said that if the negotiations are important enough, you need two note-takers – one who takes political notes and the other one who takes notes indiscriminately. But the discriminating note-taking is just as important as the non-discriminating kind. The same goes for interpreting services. You may need an interpreter who has a 110 per cent mastery of the language, but you also need another one who understands the politics of the language. It is often said that victory has many fathers.

Did the composition of other delegations have an influence on the manner in which negotiations were conducted?

It has to be noted that most heads of delegation were given the title of "Ambassador"; they were carefully selected and sent to Geneva to attend the CSCE negotiations in an expert capacity. Local ambassadors had other tasks to tend to; these tasks were usually unrelated to the Conference as such. This was true for most delegations, with the exception of the Soviet Union's delegation. The head of their delegation in the Geneva negotiations was none other than Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Kovalev, a high-ranking official who practically dedicated all his time to the Conference, always arrived on time and was always the last to leave any kind of meeting or commission.

During our various debates, what we noticed happening quite clearly was the beginning of a coordinated policy among countries belonging to the European Economic Community (EEC). The idea of bringing any kind of "outside" coordinated foreign policy positions into the activities of the European Economic Community

was highly controversial. The French were especially keen that common positions on foreign policy should not be discussed under the CSCE umbrella, since there was already a separate body within the EEC designated for that purpose. That way, one would not mix the part of the agenda that dealt with EEC affairs with policy co-ordination business.

But it was already obvious in Dipoli that an effort was being made to coordinate the positions of the EEC members on certain items of the CSCE agenda. One can safely say that NATO never tried to coordinate anything at any stage of the process, but the EEC group was certainly eager to play that role. My way of putting it to the members of the EEC in those years was that their foreign policy coordination effort began in fact with the CSCE; at any rate, our original proposals regarding cooperation in the fields of economics were worded along those lines.¹²

As for the NATO countries' engagement in the CSCE, you will see that, in the annex to the "Blue Book", Canada and the United States of America are mentioned as being among those present at the consultations and expecting to attend the Conference. This clearly implies that they too shared responsibility for security in Europe, and it was a way of bringing NATO into the process without spelling that out.

Thus, it was agreed from the very beginning that, whatever discussions we had, they would take place outside military alliances. This was of the utmost importance for Romania, given that it was making every effort to distance itself from the Soviet Union at that time. Romania wanted no part in the proposals being advanced by the Soviet delegation, because it wanted to signal in every conceivable way that it was different from the rest of the Eastern Bloc. Romania's stance also suited the Western Europeans very well.

Was there much room for bilateral negotiations or discussions in all of this and were there not open issues that you knew could create turbulence?

There can be no multilateral politics without bilateral politics. All multilateral procedures, when it comes to anything important, always lead to a situation in which the participating countries pursue bilateral relations with individual delegations, among other things, in order to influence the behaviour of those delegations in the multilateral talks. That is the norm in this sort of thing. And it is also true that "like-minded" groups are always formed during a multilateral process. That is because, whether such groups are formal or just occasional, they will have common interests and will push them. So to make a clear distinction between multilateral and bilateral is to misunderstand the nature of international negotiations.

12 See Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations, Chapter 2 (§ 25): "The Committee shall be responsible for drawing up a draft final document/documents containing guidelines and concrete recommendations which could stimulate common efforts for increased cooperation in the fields of economics (...) which might guide the participating States in their mutual relations in these areas and which they might utilize in the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements, as well as recommendations on specific measures for the development of cooperation which could be agreed by participating States."

Now, we had gathered a large variety of topics for the negotiations that had various degrees of importance for the different participants. Some topics were significant for one or two participating States, while to the rest of us they were irrelevant. This created the basis for a strong negotiating stance along the lines of: “Unless you go along with this point, I will not give my consent to that point.” So it gave rise to some very assertive negotiating positions, given that consensus was a *sine qua non* condition. The set of circumstances that defined the space for action differed over the various stages.

Therefore, different delegations sometimes had divergent ideas on what the Conference should cover. For the Soviets, “security” meant traditional military and political security. They did not devote too much attention to economic matters. The main forum for economic matters between East and West in those days was the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). But on the other hand, there was no opposition to having economic matters and environmental matters by the same token on the agenda, because everybody was amenable to considering and debating such matters.

One day in the course of the second stage, our Foreign Minister asked me for a forecast: “How much longer do you think the Geneva stage will last?” I said to him: “Anything between six months and two years.” And it turned out to be two years. Two years was a bit too much for the general public to take, especially when the news from Geneva kept sparking such headlines as: “Negotiations will be protracted” or “More delay expected” or “Total deadlock in the negotiations”.

So when and how did this deadlock during the later phase of the Geneva negotiations loosen up?

The situation started to change roughly around Easter 1975. This coincided with a change in the composition of the Soviet delegation because that was the time when Sergey Kondrashov¹³ of the KGB joined us. A remarkable man – he spoke flawless English, German and French and was obviously a very well-educated person and an exceptionally skilful negotiator. So this man was sent as an envoy with the task of getting the message across that the Soviet Union wanted an agreement and was therefore prepared to give in on a number of thorny issues that had bogged the process down thus far. And from there on agreement on some of the stickiest points was reached.

The Soviet delegation was formidable in number as well as in characters. It was during this time that I met one of the most skilful diplomats I have ever known: Lev

¹³ Sergey Aleksandrovich Kondrashov (1923–2007) served in the Red Army during WWII, where he earned his military rank of Lieutenant General. He held a PhD in history and acted as an assistant and interpreter for the Soviet Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries from 1944 to 1947. He took an active part in the establishment of the so-called Information Committee [future KGB] as a response to the creation of the CIA in the United States. Up until his retirement in 1992, Sergey Aleksandrovich Kondrashov served the KGB Office of Counter-intelligence

at various posts of responsibility and under cover of various functions in different countries: United Kingdom (1953–1955), Austria (1957–1959) and the Federal Republic of Germany (1966–1967). He was subsequently appointed deputy chief of foreign intelligence services and senior consultant on counter-intelligence and foreign policy to Yury Vladimirovich Andropov, KGB Chairman (1967–1982), and future General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1982–1984).

Isaakovich Mendelevich¹⁴, a very experienced UN man who sometimes was a bit more forthcoming than others in *tête-à-tête* discussions in the late hours of the day, when he would say things he would never have dared to voice in the meeting hall.

For example, I once asked him off the record: “Why is it that you Soviets are so unwilling to give notice of military manoeuvres unless they are very large-scale – why not smaller ones? Why is that such a sticky issue for you?” And he said: “My friend, it is easy to understand if you think of our situation. If you have one German division and one American division, you have two NATO divisions. If you have one Soviet division and one Polish division, you have zero divisions.” Of course, I didn’t report this conversation because that would have been detrimental to him had it been known anywhere else, but I wrote it down. It was more proof that they [the Soviets] never trusted the Poles. And why should they have trusted them?

So anyhow, in late spring of 1975, it was obvious that the Soviets wanted the Conference wound up and that the highest leadership in Moscow was pressing to see some results. As soon as one side understands that the other is in a hurry, then the need for a speedy conclusion can be exploited to extract concessions, and that was precisely what happened.

Anyway, nitpicking discussions in commissions on the first and third baskets¹⁵ had started to seriously compromise the outcome of the whole process. There were certainly periods when it looked as if there would be no tangible results, especially in the early months of 1975, because we had simply come to a standstill, with no progress having been made on the essentials.

It was only in the late spring of 1975 that we knew that the Conference was going to yield something real. Because then the Soviets started to give in. It really was a case of them giving in, as opposed to some kind of a *quid pro quo*, because they gave up positions which were unacceptable to the other participants, all for the sake of achieving a Final Act.

Besides the changes in the composition of the Soviet delegation in Geneva, what else do you think set the Conference back in motion and led to the Helsinki Summit?

The US State Department recently made public the discussions between [Soviet Foreign Minister] Andrey Gromyko and [National Security Advisor, and from 1973,

14 Lev Isaakovich Mendelevich (1918–1989) graduated from Moscow State University in 1941 and served in the Red Army from 1941 until 1945. He was hired by the Information Committee [to become the KGB] that year and worked in the unit until 1952. He was then promoted to the diplomatic services of the Foreign Ministry and was given several missions abroad; until 1965 he was also engaged in the unit in charge of international organizations. From 1965 to 1968 he held the post of Director of the department dealing with Latin America and from 1968 to 1970 he served as the Deputy Head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations in New York, where he took part in the formulation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Mendelevich held the title of Soviet Ambassador-at-Large from 1972 to 1984, until he was appointed Ambassador of USSR to

Denmark. He is remembered by almost all the participants of this project for his remarkable personality and excellent negotiating skills.

15 The basket formula became a part of the working terminology used during the Dipoli Consultations in order to encompass under one practical term the many different issues foreseen to be discussed under the main three agenda subjects of the conference: I) Questions relating the Security in Europe; II) Cooperation in the fields of Economics and Science and Technology and the Environment; III) Cooperation in Humanitarian and other fields. The term “basket” was replaced by the word “dimension” in the late 1980s

Secretary of State] Henry Kissinger. There is something to be said for the proper implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in the United States! Many documents available from these Kissinger-Gromyko talks shed an entirely new light on some phases of the negotiations. Dr. Reimaa had access to many of these documents and to some degree he refers to them in his book,¹⁶ but he tells me there is plenty more material that he could have incorporated, if he had had access to it at the time. I would say that these are well worth reading, and you can find them easily on the Internet.¹⁷

What is so important is to see the whole picture in the sense that you see both who the actors are and the forces that motivate those actors. Sometimes it's rather difficult to know to what degree, for instance, personal ambition is the driving force or when there is a real political movement behind something. Sometimes you are dealing with a situation in which there has been a back-door deal that has not been documented, which is presented as a done deal. And back-door deals often comprise elements that have nothing to do with one another. For example, trade-offs along the lines of: "I will support you with your policies in Kosovo if you support me with my policies in Afghanistan." For the historian who does not have an overview of the part of the story that is not in the documents, it becomes impossible to answer questions such as: "How come they changed their policies overnight? What was behind it?"

The third basket was of course mainly the West Europeans' concern, and in this regard, the Americans kept a low profile in Geneva; they proceeded with tact and had an excellent head of delegation, a man sent from Washington, George Vest¹⁸, who later on became Under-Secretary for European Affairs. Vest was a brilliant diplomat and also a man who well understood that this was a European project, even though the US was on board. He knew that the Americans had their own bilateral channels and way of dealing with Moscow and did not really need any intermediaries. But being a sophisticated man, Vest never said so; we all just knew that was the way the US ran things.

The Soviets accepting the "third dimension"¹⁹ – that was the key. Many delegations' interest gravitated around the two German States, of course – mostly because those delegations had what one could call a concrete problem with that issue. And of course, there was parallel progress in the bilateral relationship between the two German States. They had a reason to "multilateralize" some matters which they were also pursuing on the bilateral level. But set aside these national interests, and it was obvious from the

¹⁶ Markku Reima: *Helsinki Catch – European Security Accords 1975* (Published by Edita, Helsinki, 2008).

¹⁷ These records are stored at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and were declassified in 2003. A particularly interesting transcript from the Kissinger reports is the conversation between Kissinger and Gromyko had a few weeks before the Summit. (Last consulted April 2013 at: www.ford.utexas.edu/library).

¹⁸ George Southall Vest was a United States Department of State official who had earned his military rank of Colonel of the United States Army during WWII. In 1967 he was posted to Brussels as Deputy Chief of Missions of the US Mission to the European Commission, a post he held until 1969. He

moved on to the post of Deputy Chief of the US Mission to NATO and remained in Brussels until 1972. He attended the Dipoli Consultations and the first stage of the CSCE in his function of US Representative for European Affairs. From 1974 onwards, Vest was successively appointed Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs (1974–1977), Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs (1977–1981), Ambassador to the European Union (1981–1985) and State Department Director General of the Foreign Service (1985–1989).

¹⁹ Ambassador Iloniemi is referring here to the issues related to discussions on human rights and fundamental freedoms. (Also see: footnote 15).

very beginning that the Soviet delegation co-ordinated the positions of the so-called “socialist countries”. They didn’t even pretend they didn’t.

As hosts, it was our greatest concern to be even-handed and balanced and not to rock the boat. Maintaining our credibility was our prime concern, so that everybody would feel that those who were running the process were not trying to exploit it. Given that the process was so valuable to us, our highest priority was not to jeopardize it at any stage. The Cold War was a high-pressure thing, and because of that high pressure, the priorities were different and the issues more significant for national policies than they are today. Take the issue of confidence-building measures: These were really designed to render impossible events like the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, which began under the guise of “military manoeuvres” in the GDR. The pre-notification of major military movements and manoeuvres was intended to make sudden changes to the political balance in Europe impossible, so that we would not one morning wake up to find ourselves in an occupied country.

Looking back, though, the Helsinki Summit was the highlight of the entire process. Nothing beats a summit of that kind. The Belgrade Follow-up Meeting was a more difficult gathering because the negotiations in Belgrade were not about principles; they were about implementing the principles adopted in Helsinki. And implementation, of course, presents a greater challenge than reaching a consensus on a set of lofty principles, although that was by no means an easy task either.

Did you have the opportunity to attend the proceedings during the Belgrade and Madrid Follow-up Meetings?

I formally left the process after the Summit in 1975. I was no longer a participant who came to the Conference on a daily basis. But since I had been appointed Director for Political Affairs and then Under-Secretary of Political Affairs, I of course had plenty to do with these matters until 1 May 1977. On that day, I was appointed Ambassador to Washington.

That was a different game entirely, but in view of the years I had spent with the CSCE, I found that people (i.e. political people) were really interested in my experience, and they wanted to know more about the CSCE. And during my Washington years, without being formally involved, I was in touch with the CSCE process through my contacts with individuals.

As I didn’t stay through the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting in 1977–1978, I was really not exposed to the subsequent phases. I had only a brief stint there, and the same was true for the Madrid Follow-up Meeting in 1983, where I was also present only for a very short time. It was a visit just to observe what was going on, not to intervene. That happened to coincide with the spectacular events in Spain during which the *Guardia Civil* tried to take over the parliament. You may remember the moment when some of the gendarmes went to the *Palacio de las Cortes* and shot into the ceiling and demanded to be allowed to assume power. Then King Juan Carlos made a very famous TV speech in which he appealed to the nation to calm down, which happened. These were the very days during which I was in Madrid attending the Follow-up Meeting.

Until 1975, we were really only dealing with general ideas. Individual national delegations took various approaches and so on and even brought up concrete issues. But in the 1973–1975 process, we really didn't go into individual cases. In Belgrade, Arthur Goldberg, the head of the American delegation, mentioned the names of specific individuals, and that was a qualitative difference, in the sense that, during the second stage, names were mentioned outside the process in the context of bilateral talks, not in the context of the negotiations themselves.

Max Kampelman²⁰, who was the head of the US delegation in Madrid, was also a very successful lawyer by trade and a prominent member of the entourage of the then American President, Jimmy Carter. He was a key person within the Jewish organizations that took an interest in the issue of Jewish emigration. There were domestic lobbies, especially in the United States, which focused on specific issues and there was a very strong lobby in Washington that focused on the right to emigrate – meaning mainly the emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe. Max Kampelman succeeded Arthur Goldberg, who was an ex-lawyer as well – a trade union lawyer more than anything else, and a former Attorney General. In other words, what Goldberg started in Belgrade, Kampelman embraced and continued in Madrid.

How was the CSCE process viewed among the movers and shakers in Washington during your time there?

The fact is that by 1977, in the United States, the CSCE was not at the top of the agenda, even among people who were interested in foreign affairs. For the Americans, third basket issues constituted the key area in both Follow-up Meetings. It was a cherry-picking type of thing. Each and every person who had a specific interest that was covered by the CSCE process wanted to focus on that particular interest. However, the process as a whole – as a factor in reshaping international relations – was something for the scholars, not for the political minds.

But the scholars too were of interest here, because I noticed very soon after I had arrived in Washington that, unlike in most European countries, the think tanks played an important role in preparing policies. They discussed policies with those who were to execute them. At the meetings of the think tanks, you would often see people from the State Department or from the White House, from the Pentagon and so on, mixing and mingling with the academics. And I often participated in meetings of this kind. That also offered me a good opportunity to reflect on my memories of the CSCE process. And of course, many of those who participated in those talks were interested in how others negotiated.



²⁰ Max Kampelman (1920–2013) earned a degree in law at the University of Minnesota and followed his political and professional aspirations as a lawyer, negotiator, as well as representative of the Social Democrats-USA party in Washington D.C. He was appointed head of the USA delegation to the CSCE Madrid Follow-up Meeting (1980–1983) and led the USA delegation again at the Conference

on Disarmament held in Geneva from 1985 to 1989. During this time he served as counselor to the Department of State (1987–1989). Also see comments made about Max Kampelman in the interviews with Ambassador Jacques Andréani in chapter III, Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin in Chapter VIII and Spencer Oliver, chapter IX.

There is a very fine book entitled *How Nations Negotiate*²¹, by an American political figure, Fred Iklé, who was Under-Secretary of Defense at one time. When I read the book and thought about my own experience, I came to the conclusion that this Iklé book gives a very fair idea of how nations negotiate. But what was peculiar about the CSCE process was that it was conducted between two competing ideologies. One could easily see how the ideological element, which had been present from the very beginning, remained in it. For instance, the role of the State vis-à-vis the citizen was understood in a rather different way on the two sides of the Iron Curtain. They thought that the individual was the servant of the State, whereas we thought that the State worked for the good of the citizen, and we often had difficulties in really understanding how different the two philosophies were. Moreover, members of the embassies from Eastern Europe participated in these think-tank meetings from time to time, so we even had a sort of a mini “post-Conference conference” in that sort of milieu.

What impact did the *Final Act* have in terms of commitments regarding freedom of expression or speech, would you say?

I think that it is fair to say that the *Final Act* was published in all the participating countries – not in a token way, but in a very real way. *Pravda* carried the whole text, and it was made readily available to ordinary people and to all the dissidents and to everybody who was really interested in it. For instance, up until the signing of the *Final Act*, it was possible in Moscow to find foreign newspapers such as *L’Humanité* or other communist papers, but apart from that it was impossible. But after the signing of the *Final Act*, they opened the door a little bit, so that at least in the international hotels you could find newspapers which were not necessarily well-disposed to the Soviet system.

That’s one thing – access to information from the other side became much better. Then there was a certain relaxation of restrictions on travel and family reunifications, which changed the way in which people saw the “wrong” society, because they were able to see a competing society – they were able to see that things could be done in another way. Therefore, it was a natural thing to raise expectations back home. Dissidents often got international recognition and there was quite often intervention from the Western countries in favour of dissidents in those years. That legitimized the role of the dissidents as interlocutors who had the right to have their own opinions. They had, if not an equal right, then at least some right to put forward their ideas and their complaints. So in that sense it may not have brought down the Berlin Wall, but it did perhaps make a crack in it. The fact that the Russians stopped scrambling radio broadcasts from the West also greatly improved access to information from abroad. And then, of course, there was *samizdat*²² publishing, which was a different thing really. But even that was often based on radio reports that people had followed.

21 Fred Charles Iklé: *How Nations Negotiate* (published by Harvard University, Center for International Affairs, reprint December 1964).

22 *Samizdat* (loosely translated as “self-published and propagated”) refers to a dissident practice, which during the

Soviet era consisted of reproducing censored publications or writings using very rudimentary means and distributing them to individuals or circulating them through clandestine networks.

All these years later, do you think the OSCE has been rendered redundant and outgrown its relevance as compared to other international or regional organizations?

My question really would be, since we do have the OSCE: Why don't we bring these elements into the OSCE rather than try to create a competing or a parallel thing? Why don't we avail ourselves of the opportunity to discuss the hard security issues, for instance, in the Ministerial Council meetings? I don't see any barrier to that. It depends so much on what the ultimate goals of the participating States really are. After all, there are certain processes that have been going on in Europe for a number of years, in which the views of the various OSCE countries are opposed to each other, and one of them is the enlargement of NATO. Is the enlargement of NATO an issue which could be discussed in a place like the OSCE? That's a good question. Could it be on the agenda? I don't think it could, because consensus is a way of taking decisions, so what it would really mean is a rather theoretical debate, with no hope of achieving any outcome.

A less controversial issue is the enlargement of the European Union. It has more political implications than most people normally think, but I don't think that the European Union countries would be prepared to let non-members interfere in how they see the process of enlargement. So that's not perhaps a good candidate at all for the OSCE agenda.

While I'm trying to identify good candidates for this, I could point to a number of very real, concrete, security-related issues that need attention, such as a European energy policy. But there is no agreement even within the European Union on an energy policy, so how could they ever reach an all-Europe energy policy? Such a policy, of course, would be a goal the Russians would like to reach, as Russia is a net provider of energy. The realities of today do not favour that sort of imbalance. If we take the really important political issues of today and add to them a couple of other interesting questions – for example, what climate change will do for the Barents Sea area and the exploitation of the natural resources of the continental shelf – I sincerely believe the OSCE couldn't deal with that either.

International organizations often outlive their usefulness, because they are infested by so many vested interests desirous of keeping things going. And of course, the hope is that, even if the OSCE does not live up to our desires today, it still exists and under more auspicious circumstances it might live up to our expectations in the future. This is a perfectly good argument in favour of the United Nations, for example. Under prevailing circumstances, it may not be what we would really like it to be. But why not have it? Because, were we ever to need it desperately one day again, it would probably be impossible to create it. So, these are tools in the box that you pick up when you have a good use for them. But if you throw them away, it will be extremely difficult to have to craft them anew when you need them again.

So even with all its imperfections, it's better to have the OSCE as a vehicle for national policies or priorities, or the preoccupations of most of the participants, than to have no such platform. I don't think that there are many participating States of the OSCE for

whom the highest priority is the principles themselves. Their highest priority is to use an existing organization to promote their own policies.

Is this trait of today's OSCE radically different from the priorities of its CSCE forbear?

The basic difference lies of course in the fact that the CSCE reflected the Cold War way of doing things. When ideological barriers no longer existed in the sense that they used to, the barriers that were left were more administrative in nature. Often they were politically motivated, but there was no longer an ideological barrier. When the Russians say that they have resorted to "administrative means" for solving a problem, it means that one should not seek any legal basis or think there is a particular reason for what they are doing.

The way in which the OSCE functions today makes it difficult to draw a comparison with what we then thought would be the proper way of dealing with the matters we discussed. A concept such as a representative for humanitarian matters was inconceivable in those days. Monitoring elections would have been a laughable thing, because there weren't any proper elections in many of the participating countries. In some countries, elections were more of a ceremony or a ritual than a way of choosing a leadership.

So it's very difficult for me to see how the OSCE of today could really be perceived as a continuum of the CSCE of the Cold War era, because there is, to my mind, such an obvious break, not in terms of principles, because the principles still stand, but in the way in which the operative part of the process is now evolving. One can really say that the only operative part after 1975 was the Follow-up Meetings. These had been designed to put pressure on the participants to live up to their commitments, so that principles would be turned into action. I'm not so sure that this intention was shared or appreciated by the Soviets, because they wanted a political dialogue, and the Russians still want a political dialogue today, rather than a system for monitoring compliance with undertakings. Of course, a political dialogue can comprise that aspect, but that's not its main purpose. The Russians have quite clearly indicated that they do not want the OSCE as it is. What they have also said is that they would like to take the OSCE back to its origin.

Now, where *is* the origin? Is it 1954 and the Molotov proposal? Is it the 1969 Budapest Declaration? Or is it 1969 and the Finnish proposal? Well, I guess "origin" for the Russians mainly means that the emphasis should be put on the first basket – principles, military issues, hard security – whereas the third basket represents what we nowadays call "soft security", a term that didn't exist in those days. So, they focus their interest on "hard security" and complain that that there is no broad-based international organization at which they can discuss hard security, because the North Atlantic Council [the principal political decision-making body within NATO] is, according to them, unsatisfactory for this purpose. Their role on the North Atlantic Council has in their view been sidelined to such a degree that they cannot really use it in the way they would like to, so they don't feel that NATO is the solution for them. The UN is not a European organization and is in any case designed for other purposes. So in a way I understand their thinking.

Since the early 1990s, we have seen many changes and geopolitical fusions as well as divisions, shifts in values and political priorities. In light of these changes, do you think that the OSCE has a function, a future?

The basic question, of course, is: What kind of forums do we need for the purpose of maintaining good relations among States on a regional basis?

It's interesting to see that, when the UN Charter was drafted in 1945, it provided for the creation of regional organizations. And what we have seen since then has been first of all the formation of the UN regional economic commissions and then a growing number of regional organizations that have also staged political missions. In the world of the Cold War, a regional organization that spanned the Berlin Wall was a very strange animal, because under its umbrella there were countries that represented competing ideologies, and in terms of power politics they were adversaries.

These days, we no longer speak of adversaries but of partners – even in situations where “adversarial” would be a more honest way of describing the situation. But they are not enemies. An enemy is somebody with whom we are in conflict. An adversary is somebody with whom we are in competition.

The OSCE aims at managing competition for the purpose of managing conflict. If we were to dismantle the OSCE, how else would we do this? What else could offer us such a system of rules and principles and practices? I think we would have to start again from scratch, because, to my way of thinking, there is certainly a need for a regional organization with a political mission. We must not be too tempted to say that the *Paris Charter* has been implemented, because we still are some distance from living up to it. All the participating States of the OSCE nowadays proclaim that they are democracies, but if we have a closer look at some of them, we could say that the concept of democracy has been stretched a good deal.

The principle of the rule of law is clearly stressed in the *Paris Charter*²³, which, by the way, was signed by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev for the still-united USSR. Today, Dmitry Medvedev speaks about legal nihilism in his own country. I would say that the concept of legal nihilism is quite remote from that of the rule of law. So one could say with reason that we are still in a phase of development in which the goals set by the CSCE have not been attained. And as I said earlier on, nobody knew in 1975 or in 1990 that the goals they had set themselves would no longer be theirs a dozen years down the road. And none of these countries repudiated the basic principles or the *Paris Charter*. In a way, it is not so unusual in life to find that our principles diverge from our actual practices. There's an old saying which holds that it is in human nature to compare one's own best intentions with the worst practices of one's adversary. And we may be pretty close to that state of affairs, I believe.

23 The *Charter of Paris for a New Europe* (also known as the “Paris Charter”) includes a declaration entitled “A new era of Democracy, Peace and Unity”, in which a sentence states that: “Democracy, with its representative and pluralist

character, entails accountability to the electorate, the obligation of public authorities to comply with the law and justice administered impartially. No one will be above the law.”

So to conclude, I would really say that the reasons for the OSCE coming into being in the first place haven't gone away – they are still here, alive and well. Whether the OSCE offers the best conceivable vehicle for dealing with these problems remains an open question. You can say: “No, it does not deserve to exist.” But then that begs the question: “How do we take care of the conflicting interests and contradictory policies of States that we are still living with or next to?” The answer might be: “We need a regulatory body.” The Russian response to that would be: “Then we will need to recreate the CSCE and start from scratch, putting the emphasis on a different area than the one it has been on until now.”

I don't think we will see any agreement on such an approach, because that approach would require that we delete certain matters from our agenda, or that we ascribe less importance to matters which are of paramount importance to some members, but which are a nuisance to others. If we were to dismantle the OSCE now, I cannot see agreement being reached on another organization that would tackle the same set of issues as those that are now being addressed by the OSCE. How the OSCE can be further developed is quite another matter, and so too is the question of how priorities can be reshuffled within the OSCE.

One criticism of the OSCE is that it has been too interested in a limited circle of countries. And if one counts the places to which it has sent missions, that is probably true. But then again, take the issue of fair elections. In some countries there is more need for monitoring than in others, yet on the other hand, no country is prepared to say: “We need more monitoring than others.” And as long as we cannot conceptualize a better way of dealing with these matters, we might as well stick to what we have. The question about whether we can define the European Union as an international organization at all remains pending, because the EU is in fact something between an international organization and a federal system of government.

Did you feel at any moment during the CSCE process that you were paving the way for an organization of the same name – which might be aiming at different goals some 40 years later?

There is always a temptation to think that things were more planned than they actually were, that there was a hidden agenda. There sometimes was a hidden agenda, but not all that often. After all, it's so often true in international relations that it is events that drive people and not any great master plan.

I do not see the OSCE today as a major shaper of the European agenda. The European agenda is more likely being shaped in places like Brussels. The OSCE is an interesting and even sometimes helpful sideshow, but it remains peripheral to the main show. You know, I'm just trying to be honest here ...

I'm not saying that the role the CSCE played didn't bring about any beneficial consequences for Europeans in its own time. On the contrary, I believe it did play a major role in the mid-1970s. But there are several reasons why its role is much smaller today. And one of those reasons is the break-up of the Soviet Union and the character of the membership after that, because we now have a number of countries with a different political culture – a very different political culture. They may be

nominally democracies and market economies but even so, we are simply dealing with a totally different kind of membership.

And then, of course, there is the point I made earlier on, which is that the CSCE was something that was created for the purpose of managing the Cold War. And the Cold War as we knew it is over. In 1990, we probably believed that we had solved forever the issue of competing systems. Is there something else that would be a better fit for our present time? Can we conceive of an organization which would do a better job in the present set of circumstances? The Russians say that we can. Most others say that it's not at all likely that we could. There's absolutely no consensus on a replacement.

There is an American saying: "If it ain't broken, don't fix it." Well, it ain't broken, but the fact is that it doesn't work the way we thought it should. The alternative, though, is that if it were dissolved, then we would have nothing at all. So it's probably better to keep it the way it is, with all its limitations and shortcomings. You see, there may be a time when we will be able to revive some parts of it and fashion it to suit the needs of a near future.

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The interview with Ambassador Itoniemi was conducted in English on the premises of the OSCE Prague Office, on 1 and 2 September 2009, by Alice Němcová.



3.



4. President Urho Kekkonen (center) and Minister of Foreign Affairs Olavi J. Mattila (left) inspecting their task force, flanked by Ambassador Jaakko Iloniemi, a few moments before the Helsinki Summit began. Finlandia Hall, 30 July 1975.



5. CSCE participants give a standing ovation to Heads of State or Government who just signed the Helsinki Final Act, Finlandia Hall, 1 August 1975.

Jaakko Iloniemi

Jaakko Iloniemi was born in Helsinki in 1932 and graduated from the University of Helsinki in 1957. Soon after, he started to work for the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he held a number of posts. Between 1965 and 1971, he served as Head of the Department for Development Cooperation in the Finnish Foreign Service.

In 1971, Iloniemi joined his country's permanent mission to the United Nations in New York as Deputy Permanent Representative to the Economic and Social Council. In view of his expertise in multilateral diplomacy, he was recalled to Finland in June 1972 to lead the political preparatory work for the preliminary talks that were to take place in Dipoli in November 1972. He was accredited as special adviser during the first Helsinki Consultations



and appointed Head of the Finnish delegation during the second stage in Geneva. During the 1975 Helsinki Summit, he assisted in his function as Ambassador.

Ambassador Iloniemi left the CSCE process in 1975, returning to the Finnish Foreign Ministry as Director for Political Affairs, later becoming Under-Secretary for Political Affairs. In May 1977, he travelled back to the United States, this time to Washington, D.C., as Finland's Ambassador to the USA. He visited the Belgrade (1977–1978) and Madrid (1980–1983) CSCE Follow-up Meetings, but assumed no official role at either gathering.

Although officially retired from professional life, Ambassador Iloniemi is often invited to events as an expert and lecturer by universities, think tanks and research institutions.

He has written numerous articles on European integration and Finnish external relations in specialized publications such as the Finnish Journal of International Affairs, and he also has made regular contributions to Finnish daily newspapers (*Helsingin Sanomat*, among others).

He holds a Honorary Doctorate of Political Science from the University of Helsinki.

In 1999, Ambassador Iloniemi was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of the White Rose, the highest Finnish decoration. He held the post of Chancellor of the Order from 1997 until 2004.



6. Kalevi Sorsa was Minister for Foreign Affairs until 4 September 1972. He was then appointed for his first term as Prime Minister of Finland, a post he held until 13 June 1975. (Davos, January 1983)



7. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland Abti Karjalainen (right), (in office from 4 September 1972 to 13 June 1975) and Secretary General for Foreign Affairs, Richard Tötterman (left), heading the delegation of Finland during stage I of the CSCE in Helsinki from 4 to 8 July 1973.



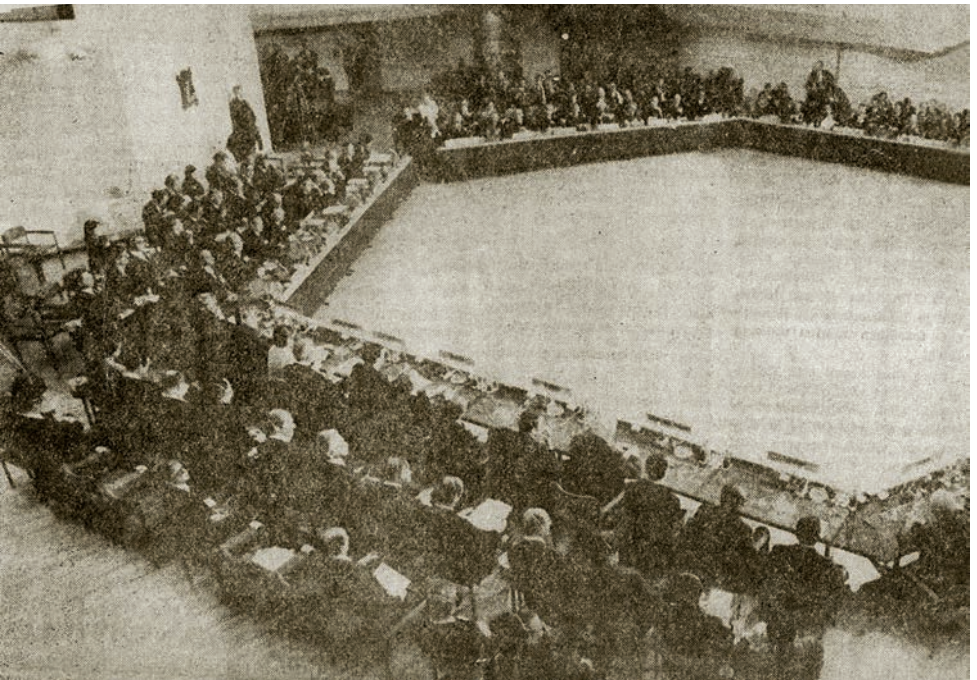
8. A "full house" in Finlandia Hall during the opening session of the CSCE Helsinki Summit. (30 July 1975)



9. President Kekkonen delivers his welcoming speech to the participants at the Helsinki Summit with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Olavi J. Mattila (in office from 13 June to 30 November 1975), seated at his right. Back row (left to right): Jaakko Iloniemi, Ahti Karjalainen, Kalevi Sorsa and Matti Tuovinen. (30 July 1975)



10. Side view of the Dipoli multi-functional Conference Center situated on the campus of the Helsinki University of Technology on the Otaniemi peninsula in Espoo, located some 9 kilometers North-West of Helsinki.



11. The seating arrangement during the Dipoli consultations was set up into a hexagon; heads of delegations and their deputies sat at the negotiating table, while the rest of the delegation sat in the two rows behind them. (22 November 1972)



12. Bird-eye view of the Finlandia Hall, flying all 35 flags of the CSCE participating States expected to come to Helsinki for the CSCE Summit. (28 July 1975)



13. The esplanade in front of the Finlandia Hall was ready for delegations weeks before the Summit; that day the rain must have dissolved the glue on some letters freshly pasted onto the information board. (25 July 1975)



14.



Jiří Opršal of Czechoslovakia

I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in February 1958, after returning from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) as one of the first two Czechoslovak students to graduate from that school. The other student was my colleague, Jaromír Johanes¹, who later became the last Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs before the 1989 “Velvet Revolution”. As French was always my main foreign language (my major specialization at the Institute was France and francophone countries), I was assigned to the Ministry’s Western European Section.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had responsibility for the Western European Section in the early 1960s, was Professor Jiří Hájek², whom I had known very well since my studies at the University of Economics and Political Sciences. We spent considerable time together at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because he knew that I had specialized at the Institute in issues related to Western Europe and integration in to the “Common Market”, as we called it at the time. By authorization

1 Jaromír Johanes was a diplomat and Communist Party politician appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1988 (succeeding Bohuslav Chňoupek) under Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec. He held this post until December 1989 and was replaced by Jiří Dienstbier with the advent of Václav Havel’s government in December 1989.

2 Jiří Hájek (1913–1993) began his diplomatic career as Ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Great Britain in 1955. He was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1958 and from 1962 to 1965 he was a member of the Czechoslovak delegation to the United Nations. Between 1965 and 1968 he held the post of Minister of Education

and he also held the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs under Alexander Dubček’s government from April to September 1968. After he had outspokenly condemned the invasion of his country in August 1968, he was dismissed from his post, as well as from the Communist Party. Together with Václav Havel, Zdeněk Mlynář and Pavel Kohout, he took part in the formulation and was one of the original signatories of the Charter 77 [a “dissident” human rights appeal made public in 1977]. He emerged as one of the group’s leading spokespersons and in 1988, he founded the Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee, a citizens’ initiative aimed at compliance with human rights commitments contained in the *Helsinki Final Act*.

of the Deputy Minister, I became one of the first at the Ministry to focus on Western European integration, and I wrote several studies and articles on that subject.

My greatest wish was to be sent to France as my first diplomatic posting. Nevertheless, I had to wait a relatively long time, for it was a much-sought-after post. I had worked in the Western European Section for four years before I was posted to Paris in 1962. There, I was put in charge of the economic agenda and the establishment of diplomatic relations with newly independent African countries. I returned to Prague around Christmas 1968, having spent over six years in France.

Earlier that year, in May 1968, I observed and experienced the student uprisings in Paris and three months later the Warsaw Pact army invaded my home country. After my return, I heard of an opportunity to work in the multilateral field, as preparations were underway for the opening stage of the CSCE process in Helsinki. And so I applied, and that was the trigger that decided my transfer to the Section devoted to the pan-European Agenda, where I worked from 1969 onwards on preparations for the first-stage gathering of Foreign Ministers in Helsinki. Little did I know then that I would be dealing with the same agenda for more than 20 years.

So, you set sail on this journey with the CSCE in November 1972 in Dipoli, right from the very beginning?

Yes, and this is how things started for me. On 22 November 1972, a six-member Czechoslovak delegation, of which I was a part, flew to Helsinki for the preparatory negotiations that were to be held in the suburban district of Dipoli.

Our task was to draw up directives for formulating the text of the Helsinki gathering's final recommendations, the "Blue Book"³, as it became known in the conference jargon. For the most part, delegations from individual countries were headed by their respective ambassadors to Finland, who had been accredited in Helsinki. Oldřich Pavlovský⁴, an experienced politician and diplomat, headed our delegation. As former Czechoslovak Ambassador to Moscow, not only did he speak Russian perfectly, but he also had very good proficiency in German. Consequently, he was able to negotiate with the Western partners in German and with the Eastern ones in Russian. As roles and tasks were distributed, I was appointed his chief assistant and Secretary to the Czechoslovak delegation. Ambassador Pavlovský, relied on me a lot. I wrote all his speeches and arranged bilateral meetings, as well as organized various contacts for him. We were not very experienced in multilateral diplomacy, except for the few who had

³"The Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations" is referred to as the "Blue Book", primarily because it was bound in a sky blue paperback cover and "the book", because it defined the agenda and the modalities, as well as the rules of procedure the Conference was to be guided by for the subsequent 33 years.

⁴Oldřich Pavlovský joined the Communist Party in 1945 and as a successful and active member at the level of the

Party's National Assembly and its Central Committee, he was appointed Minister of Internal Commerce in 1968. In 1970 he was posted to Helsinki as Ambassador to Finland. As mentioned in the text, Oldřich Pavlovský led the Czechoslovak delegation to the CSCE in Dipoli due to this ambassadorial rank and consequently, through the Geneva stage. He was appointed Ambassador to Yugoslavia in 1977 and also attended to some of the sessions of the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting.

previously worked within the UN structure. This was the case of Vratislav Vajnar⁵, an adviser to the Communist Party who eventually embarked on a stellar career when he became a very close adviser of Gustáv Husák, the Czechoslovak President and Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

As part of the division of labour between the participants in the Helsinki talks⁶, the Warsaw Pact countries were to prepare, within the framework of the overall concept, a blueprint for the creation of a pan-European mechanism to serve as a permanent follow-up authority once the Conference had come to an end. At that point, we all matter-of-factly assumed that the main delegation in our group (i.e., the Soviet one) would focus on the cardinal item on the Helsinki meeting's agenda – the well-known and famous “ten commandments” – the principles, or Decalogue, to give it its official term.

Was there a spokesperson for the Soviet delegation at the Helsinki consultations whom you remember in particular?

The central figure and key person in the Soviet delegation in Dipoli was Ambassador Lev Mendelevich⁷, a highly qualified diplomat “*par excellence*”. We would all flock to his presentations on the individual principles to be included in the *Final Act* as if he were a university professor. His statements and speeches were outstanding, both in Russian and in English. Thus, the Soviet delegation had clearly and quite naturally taken over the lead as regarded the declaration of the leading principles, as well as their military aspects.

As far as economic and environmental issues were concerned, the [East] Germans and Bulgarians were quite keen on those subjects. Our Polish and Hungarian colleagues also took care of making contacts and exchanging information.

The Czechoslovak delegation was supposed to coordinate discussions on the follow-up steps to be taken after the conclusion of the Conference. The document we were to promote was, in essence, a proposal for the establishment of a pan-European secretariat and a mechanism that would assure the continuity of the CSCE as a whole. We started to talk about these issues only towards the very end of the Helsinki consultations, as the main bargaining and negotiations about the compilation of the “Blue Book” aimed at finding a balance between the individual principles, the exchange of information and the formation of contacts – in short, everything pertaining to human rights. In fact, they were not discussed much at all, initially.

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⁵ Vratislav Vajnar worked for the International Policy Section of the Communist Party Central Committee from 1972 to 1974 and for the next three years he acted as personal advisor to the party's First Secretary, Gustáv Husák, and as chief of staff of his cabinet until 1983. He was then appointed Minister of the Interior, a post he held until 1988.

⁷ Lev Isaakovitch Mendelevich (1918–1989) had been a member of the USSR delegation to the United Nations (1968 to 1970). While posted in New York he took part in the formulation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. He attended the Dipoli Consultations in his capacity as Ambassador-at-Large and throughout the Geneva stage of the CSCE he remained the main negotiator for matters related to the chapter relevant to the question of Security in Europe.

⁶ The term “Helsinki talks” refers here to the preparatory phase of the three-stage CSCE process. Officially, this meeting was called the “Helsinki Consultations” and lasted a little over seven months (22 November 1972 – 8 June 1973).

So when did the question of cooperation in humanitarian and other fields become a subject of contention?

In the course of the negotiations, the Western delegations eventually came up with the requirement that reference be made to human rights and fundamental freedoms and that they should form part of the Conference's declaration of principles. This bothered the Soviets a lot. Their adviser for the third dimension was a certain Valerian Zorin⁸, a veteran of Soviet diplomacy and formerly the Soviet Ambassador to Prague in the post-World-War-II period. Zorin had an almost paternalistic attitude towards the Czechoslovaks, and towards me, in particular. You see, his daughter and I had been classmates at university. But to come back to the issue of human rights, Zorin was very displeased with this turn of affairs (i.e., the notion that human rights principles should become part of the Decalogue), as he foresaw certain drawbacks to it and considered that it amounted to "deceitful tactics" on the part of the Western delegations.

Was there not a more complex chemistry among the participating States than that of a two-sided confrontation?

A characteristic of the preparatory negotiations in Dipoli was that all the issues were addressed by the blocs in the form of collective statements. There was the group of NATO countries with their coordination meetings on the one hand, and on the other the Warsaw Pact group, which also held its own coordination meetings before each session. Therefore, a very important role was played by the neutral and non-aligned countries, as they in fact took upon themselves the task of defusing confrontation and finding compromises. It should be added that they proved their mettle in this respect. A close colleague of mine, Edouard Brunner⁹, a member of the Swiss delegation, played a crucial role in Dipoli. He knew how to negotiate with both sides very effectively – at times to the point of playing rough – but he always managed to jolly both sides along towards some kind of compromise formula. His skills stood out even more during the second stage of the CSCE negotiations in Geneva, which apparently accounted for his later appointment as Secretary of State in the Swiss Government.

Do you recall how the notion of the three "baskets" came about?

Well, the concept must have sneaked into the language of the Conference through a suggestion made by one of the delegations, the Swiss¹⁰, I believe. But the story I will tell you will give you an idea of the kind of atmosphere we were living in back then,

⁸ Valerian Aleksandrovich Zorin (1902–1986) started his diplomatic career in 1945 as Ambassador of the Soviet Union to Czechoslovakia, where he stayed until 1947. He returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow and from 1949 to 1951 he reported to the Information Committee [KGB to-be] of the Soviet Council of Ministers. He was reportedly promoted to the post of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, and in 1952 he served as Permanent Representative to the UN Security Council for three years. From 1955 to 1956, Zorin was further posted to Bonn as Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany and returned to his duties at the Ministry from 1956 to

1960. That year he left for New York, called once again to represent the USSR at the UN Security Council until 1962. In 1965, he was posted in Paris as Ambassador to France, where he remained until 1971. A year later, he was appointed Ambassador Plenipotentiary and dispatched to Finland to join the Soviet delegation to the CSCE from Dipoli in 1972 through the end of the Geneva stage in 1975.

⁹ See the interview with Ambassador Brunner in chapter IV.

¹⁰ Ibid

for it testifies to the considerable lack of confidence and degree of suspicion among the Eastern and Western delegations.

When the negotiations in Dipoli had advanced to the point at which the agenda for the Conference had been outlined and the definition of the issues that the committees and subcommittees were to discuss had begun to take form, there appeared three large baskets in the foyer of the conference hall in Dipoli. In them were slips of paper with the titles of agenda items, such as: “questions relating to security in Europe”, “cooperation in the fields of economics”, and so on. This was a practical joke that the attending journalists had cooked up – just to show us that the content of our consultations held no secrets for them.

When the plenary session ended and the delegates were leaving the conference hall, one of the journalists exclaimed: “And here is the future final document that will emerge from your Conference!” The delegates looked into the baskets to see what was in them and read the titles of the individual principles and chapters.

Most of the delegates started to laugh, of course, knowing it was the best response to a joke just meant to tease us. Some of the delegates, however, especially the old hands, like Zorin, took it as an affront.

He brought up the subject at the joint session that followed, asking what kind of provocation this was supposed to be, and why anybody would want to throw our most important principles – sovereignty, the inviolability of State borders, and non-interference in internal affairs – into waste-paper baskets. Another of the Soviet delegates, who was responsible for questions related to economics, added more fuel to the fire by exclaiming: “They even threw our famous five-year plan into the second garbage can along with economics!”

The point was that the only basket the socialist bloc delegates were really happy with was the third basket, their feeling being: “Let them put all their contacts and information and human rights into it and keep them there.” Thereafter, whenever the principles of cooperation in economics and environmental issues were discussed, the issues relevant to the third basket were to be referred to the relevant committee, which suited the Western representatives very well and was also convenient for the delegates from the Eastern countries, to keep such issues separate.

As regards follow-up steps, it became very evident that no fixed mechanism could as yet be considered. The US in particular maintained a very apprehensive attitude towards this item on the agenda, as the possibility of institutionalizing any follow-up steps might potentially disrupt the unity of the West or drive a wedge between America and Western Europe. After all, they were all aware of the fact that the initiative to convene the Conference had come from the East, more specifically the Soviet Union.

Later on, we would take pride in this, claiming that the idea had originated in our Institute, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), and that was true to a considerable extent. The idea was also a matter of prestige for the Soviet leader at the time, Leonid Brezhnev, who liked to present the results of the Conference as confirmation of the end of World War II and the conclusion of the Cold War era.

the Ministry of Defence – “the soldiers”, as we used to call them – I also worked in the military subcommittee, where military matters such as notification of military exercises and military convoy transfers were dealt with. Our military authorities were quite apprehensive about what this practice might lead to, which is why they were in no hurry to send someone to Geneva. Eventually, our delegation was strengthened by Colonel Milan Štembera, a veteran of the Slovak national uprising and a specialist and genuine expert in disarmament issues.

Following Štembera’s arrival in Geneva, I was able to devote all my energy to negotiations concerning follow-up activities, in line with the terms agreed upon in Helsinki. One of the increasingly delicate issues that emerged during the Geneva sessions concerned the choice of the venue in which the follow-up meeting would take place. The neutral and non-aligned countries were all rather pushy about it. The Austrians pressed their case, while the Swedes were also very assertive in this respect.

Our delegation at that point maintained active contacts with the delegation of Yugoslavia, in which I had a very close partner, Professor Ljubivoje Aćimović. He worked at – and later on directed – the Yugoslav Institute of International Relations. He was a conceptually well-rounded expert in his field. Once, as we were leaving a session on follow-up measures, I said to him: “Listen, why don’t you propose that Yugoslavia host the next session? President Tito is an internationally recognized personality, so holding the next session in Belgrade should suit everybody.” I am sure it was already on their agenda, but I thought a good word might advance the notion.

The Geneva stage lasted much longer than expected. When did the participants start to see the light at the end of the tunnel and at what point did you realize that the Summit could be a real historical event?

The end of the Geneva stage of the Conference was very dramatic, as time was moving on fast and the summer of 1975 was approaching. Moscow was particularly anxious about it, and the Soviet leadership was pressing for the closing date to be settled. During an earlier meeting between Leonid Brezhnev and the American President, Gerald Ford, it had been confirmed that the Helsinki meeting would be a supreme-level affair and that it would be attended by the 35 heads of State or government, but finding a concrete date was not easy, especially when we had to find a date in the middle of the summer. But more important was the tension that built up because one delegation in particular still did not want to join the consensus on the Summit.

At this point I should state that I always believed – throughout my 20 years with the CSCE – that attaining consensus was immensely valuable. As difficult as it may have been at times, the reality, time and again, was that whenever a consensus was reached, the outcome was politically extremely significant. Whenever an agreement was reached by general consensus, all the participating countries were forced, willy-nilly, sooner or later, to respect and implement the terms of agreement.

So to come back to the end of the second stage, the delegation that was causing the hitch in Geneva during the last days by continually raising additional requirements was not from either of the superpower blocs – it happened to be Malta.

It was no easy job being the Secretary of such a delegation, of course, as I had to handle the logistics and was responsible for every tiny practical detail. The one thing that surprised me tremendously was that I was told that I, as the delegation's Secretary, was to fly to Helsinki with the special presidential aircraft, on 26 July 1975, as the sole passenger aboard. I had not been advised in this matter and so I had no idea at the time that, whenever the President was to fly anywhere, the route had to be tested ahead of time, before the transport of any top-level delegation could take place. Thus, I was the only passenger on the special presidential aircraft and we flew to Helsinki. At our arrival, Ambassador Pavlovský invited the entire crew and me to dinner. There, he gave me the documentation pertaining to the Conference's organizational structure, the arrival schedule of the delegations, and so forth. We returned to Prague the same night on board the special aircraft.

Four days later, on 30 July 1975, the entire Czechoslovak delegation flew back to Helsinki. As soon as I took a seat on the aircraft, I experienced another surprise. The secretary of Foreign Minister Chňoupek approached me and told me that I was to take all my things and follow her to President Husák's compartment to brief him on the state of the preparations.

I had a good relationship with Minister Chňoupek, who told me later that he appreciated my professionalism and diligence. He probably wanted the President to meet me personally and have me answer any practical questions that he might have. When I started to brief the President, Minister Chňoupek interrupted me right away, probably fearing that I would take up too much of the President's precious time. He said somewhat jokingly that Comrade Opršal was capable of talking at length, but that we should limit ourselves to answering concrete questions. President Husák had only one question, namely: What was going to happen after we landed and the delegation left the plane?

I was, of course, perfectly prepared and told him that the Finnish President, Urho Kekkonen, and his entourage would be there to greet us, and then we would be taken to our hotel and that would essentially be the end of our first day. The President himself had nothing on his schedule at the Summit that day, except for listening to individual presentations. His own presentation was scheduled for another time.

How well prepared was Finland for such an unprecedented event, would you say?

I must say that the Finnish stage of the CSCE was handled perfectly, even though it could not have been an easy task, with the top officials of the 35 participating countries attending.

I should add that it was an equally tough time for me, even though I was not the only one in charge of the schedule for our delegation. Some important bilateral sessions took place under the supervision of the Chief of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Zdeněk Černík. He had a great deal of experience with the UN and international conferences, and felt quite at home in that kind of environment. He was in charge of handling bilateral contacts, and I was in charge of the preparations pertaining to the Summit. That is not to say that this arrangement made things easy – there was far too much pressure from all sides in general.

honoured, for he was a truly historic personage, acclaimed as chief leader of the non-aligned movement in the early 1960s and a great legend for my generation, which had lived through World War II.

How did your journey with the CSCE continue once the Helsinki Summit was over?

Well, I was posted with the Office of Foreign Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where I was to concentrate on the implementation of the principles of the *Final Act* by first acquainting our public with its contents, and then by preparing texts and materials about the relevant issues raised in the *Final Act*. These references needed to be incorporated into the speeches of the Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister and even the President.

Mention of what the Conference had achieved was to be widely publicized, and so we had to inject our opinions and evaluations into every communiqué we produced. In addition, I had to attend and also bring together countless meetings, which in point of fact were frequently major gatherings. As a rule, at these meetings, we analysts were also obliged to give lectures. So I lectured at the Society for the Promulgation of Political, Scientific, and Cultural Advancement, colloquially known as the “Society with a Long Name”. I also lectured to Communist Party members and made presentations on the results of the Conference for small-scale Party meetings and at larger gatherings attended by as many as 200–300 participants.

Did you not also write a publication about the CSCE and Czechoslovakia under a pen name, published a few years after 1975?

Yes, indeed, a Bratislava publishing company called *Obzor* asked me to write a brochure on the theme of “Czechoslovakia and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe”²¹, which was published in Slovak, Russian, and English. Of course, the contents of the book had to be approved by the Ideological Division of the Communist Party and written under a pen name, as it was still prohibited for employees of any ministry or public institution to publish any of their writings under their own name.

The book was divided into two parts: The first was mainly ideological, setting forth the official standpoint of Czechoslovakia on the subject of the Conference, while the second was of a more technical or theoretical nature, as I tried to expand upon the individual chapters of the *Final Act*. Later on, several people told me that the book was very helpful to them when they had to lecture on and discuss the Conference’s meaning and substance.

At first I thought that no introduction was necessary and so I focused on the individual principles. The most important ones among them were, from our perspective, the

²¹ Dr. Martin Vysocký, *Československo a Konference pro Bezpečnost a Spolupráci v Evropě*. (Published by the Slovak Information Office OBZOR, Bratislava, 1977).

unforgettable experience, as I got to meet delegates from all over the world. I was not used to such diversity, but the work itself seemed to be less demanding than the work we were doing at the CSCE.

Immediately after my return from New York, I was posted to the Czechoslovak embassy in Brussels as Minister Counsellor to Ambassador Karel Havlík. By tradition, the ambassadorial post in Belgium was assigned to someone from the Communist Party Central Committee.

When the Follow-up Meeting started in Madrid at the beginning of 1980, the Foreign Ministry informed me that I was to travel back and forth between Brussels and Madrid to negotiate military issues within the relevant working group. The military authorities in Prague had no one well enough prepared and familiar enough with CSCE procedures to handle this assignment, even though this was a very important meeting in terms of disarmament. Let me recall that preparations for the Stockholm Conference²⁶ had just started, so someone from our delegation was necessary, even if military issues were not exactly my area of expertise.

The flights back and forth between Brussels and Madrid were pleasant breaks in my daily routine, but this regime could not go on forever, as my workload at the embassy in Brussels did not diminish in proportion to my presence in Madrid. It was almost a relief when, on two occasions, the proceedings in Madrid had to be broken off. The first time it happened was after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980, and the second time was in 1981, when martial law was imposed in Poland. I stopped going to Madrid after the first interruption of negotiations.

At the beginning of 1986, I was called back from Brussels and returned to Prague, where I was once again assigned to the preparations for the Follow-up Meeting in Vienna.

What was your function at the Ministry at that time and what were the main topics you were to deal with in view of this third Vienna Follow-up Meeting?

At the Analytical Section of the Foreign Ministry, we were expected to come up with new ideas and concepts. For me, this meant that I was to consider and analyze, as well as to determine what initiative Czechoslovakia should prepare to present to the upcoming Follow-up Meeting in Vienna.

With Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* and the new way of thinking already emerging, this type of planning and outlining was a little easier during the second half of the 1980s than it had been in the early 1970s.

During the Vienna meeting, the practice of holding joint sessions with [the Eastern] allies was continued, but each individual country was expected to prepare something

²⁶The preparatory meeting for the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures took place in Helsinki from 25 October to 11 November 1983. The Stockholm stage of

these negotiations started on 17 January 1984 and lasted until 19 November 1986, as the first set of CSCE negotiations devoted to military security and disarmament.

new and of its own. The time when main lines of thought, principal ideas or pre-formulated proposals would come from Moscow and then be distributed among its satellites was over.

At that time, the Analytical Section of the Foreign Ministry was headed by Vladimír Poláček, a very experienced negotiator, who was very much in demand and quite inundated by the requests from the Foreign Minister, to whom he had to be available at all times. Therefore, most of the preparations for the Follow-up Meeting in Vienna rested on my shoulders.

As far as our initial proposal was concerned, I was thinking along the following lines: No point in trying to invent anything in the military area, as the Stockholm Conference had already been agreed upon and its results were pending. Quite frankly, I knew very well that military issues had always been at the top of any State's list of priorities, as well as being a matter of the utmost importance and since, in those days, our military authorities were rather apprehensive of such negotiations, I had a feeling that the presence of observers from all kinds of different countries during their manoeuvres might not be exactly what our army generals would want or agree to. This was something quite unprecedented and not entirely natural to them.

The area of human rights and expanding humanitarian cooperation was beyond the pale as well. Our ideological centres and power structures were not fond of any new concepts in that sphere, even in the second half of the 1980s, when, as I said before, some easing of Cold War measures could be felt. Gorbachev's leadership was still very tentative and any new trends in this sense were watched from a distance and with an understandable degree of apprehension.

It was therefore inconceivable that we should prepare any proposal or come up with any initiative in the area of human rights or the third dimension, as it would have undoubtedly been met with strong resentment and discontent in higher places, especially within the Communist Party Central Committee.

So how did you find a fair compromise, considering that the first as well as the third dimensions were off limits for your delegation?

With the situation as it was, I had my idea, which concerned the area of economic cooperation. My colleagues considered it plausible and so they gave me their support. Although the area of economic cooperation constituted an equally important part of the *Final Act*, it was undervalued in practice. Therefore, I suggested creating an economic forum to be held in Prague. Prime Minister Štrougal, who had always been interested in economics, liked the idea very much, and so did Foreign Minister Chňoupek, because this kind of proposal could also serve as a vehicle for the Czechoslovak delegation's programme.

I even went as far as suggesting that Prague should be considered as a venue for a Follow-Up meeting after the one in Vienna. That idea, however, found no support within the Ideological Section of the Communist Party, which didn't fancy the prospect that, one day, the issue of human rights might be discussed in Prague.

The idea of holding the Economic Forum got the green light from our internal political structures and so, from that point on, I devoted all my time and energy to preparing this proposal²⁷. Since I had formulated the idea, I was also responsible for promoting it during the Vienna Meeting. This is how I became the most frequently registered speaker from the socialist delegations on the Chairman's list of speakers in the second dimension working group.

What other countries took the floor in this particular working group?

In fact, Romania came up with a similar proposal in the area of economics. The Romanian delegation made proposals pertaining to all three dimensions, as far as I can recall. And so did West Germany, although their proposal was presented as the brainchild of the European Economic Community (EEC) and thus it bore more weight.

So, when the West Germans suggested that an economic conference be held in Bonn²⁸, the future of our proposal was seriously compromised. We knew that all the EEC countries would align with and support such an initiative rather than support our idea of holding a forum in Prague.

Anyway, both proposals were discussed at length in Vienna. The discussions were complicated, but concrete and non-confrontational. When our Foreign Minister Chňoupek met with his West German counterpart, Hans-Dietrich Genscher,²⁹ in 1987, he tried to harmonize our proposals. Minister Genscher reacted in his typical manner, saying that he was not sure whether it was time for an engagement party or a wedding, but that some agreement would be reached in any event.

Everything looked quite promising at that stage, so that I even began to prepare a conciliatory variant which would have started off with an Economic Forum in Prague, with emphasis on the participation of businessmen and economists, and would have ended with an Economic Conference in Bonn³⁰, which would yield conclusions that would have been prepared and developed, as well as agreed to, at governmental level.

27 The proposal for the convening of an Economic Forum (CSCE/WT/3) was submitted by the delegations of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and the German Democratic Republic on 15 December 1986. Addenda included elements of a mandate for the Economic Forum and working materials (CSCE/WT/3/Add. 1/ and 2, respectively dated 13 March and 9 October 1987). This proposal was supported by Bulgaria, Romania and the USSR (WT/3/Add.3) on 9 October 1987.

European Community (CSCE/WT/58/Add.1), Norway (CSCE/WT/58/Add.2), and Iceland (CSCE/WT/58/Add.3). The first proposal was submitted on 18 February 1987 and the addenda on 10 March, 30 June and 14 July 1987.

29 It is to be noted that Hans-Dietrich Genscher became the first Chairperson-in-Office of the CSCE Council of Ministers under the Chairmanship of Germany (Berlin, 19–20 June 1991), while Prague had become the seat of the CSCE Secretariat a few months earlier (March 1991).

28 The proposal for the convening of a CSCE Conference on Economic Co-operation in Europe (CSCE/WT/58), was submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. It included three addenda mentioning the endorsement of the proposal by the member States of the

30 The Bonn Conference on Economic Co-operation in Europe took place from 19 March to 11 April 1990 and the first Economic Forum met in Prague from 16 to 18 March 1993, under the umbrella of the 20th Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

Well, eventually the CSCE/OSCE Economic Forum did take place in Prague, as it still does, while the Bonn Conference took place in 1990 and it too yielded some important guidelines for the future of the second dimension. But you have not finished telling us about the outcome of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting.

As the 1980s drew to a close, other events began to have an impact on the overall political situation in Europe. The frequency of dissident demonstrations was increasing, which of course had an effect on us in Vienna, as it made our work as negotiators more difficult. It was a double whammy for us, so to speak. On the one hand, we were happy about the new way of thinking, but on the other, we felt obliged to pursue objective solutions and terms of agreement.

Moreover, our work in Vienna was also affected by conflicts between the Foreign Ministry and the Ideological Section of the Communist Party back in Prague. I still have in my possession material from November 1988, to which I contributed and which we entitled, "In Pursuit of an Active Policy in Human Rights". We proposed a number of new, constructive steps in this document. It was quite clear that the prosecution of demonstrating protesters could not go on forever, but no alternative internal policy had yet been determined and any initiatives in this area would have been taken as a provocation.

Towards the end of the Vienna Meeting, it had become evident that reaching a consensus with the Western delegations on holding the Economic Forum in Prague could not be taken for granted. I was also quite often in touch with Warren Zimmermann³¹, and his deputy, Robert Frowick³².

They were very forthcoming with me about their requirements, which we tried to meet, as we believed that their approval would be crucial in getting the Economic Forum to Prague. We still believed that the political changes our countries were undergoing would not proceed all too fast and that negotiations would play a crucial role. One of the issues being considered even then was the idea of reuniting East and West Germany to form a confederation. But it never even crossed anybody's mind that East Germany might disappear from the map so fast.

As the Meeting neared its end, talk turned again to the question of follow-up activities and the hosting of various expert meetings and conferences. This caused an outbreak of fierce and uncoordinated competition among the socialist countries. All of

³¹ Warren Zimmermann (1934–2004) was a US Foreign Service career diplomat who served in France, Spain, Switzerland, Venezuela and the Soviet Union on two occasions, (first from 1973 to 1975 and again from 1981 to 1984). In 1986, he was appointed Ambassador to Austria and in this capacity he served as head of the US delegation to the Vienna Follow-up Meeting and deputy head of the delegation during the CSBM negotiations. From July 1988 until 1992, he acted as US Ambassador to Yugoslavia. He resigned from ambassadorial function in 1994 in reaction to President Carter's reluctance to intervene in the Bosnian War.

³² Robert Holmes Frowick (1929–2007) was a US State Department official and Foreign Service officer. He further served in various capacities in Washington, Montreal, Paris, Prague, Rome, Brussels, Vienna and Bucharest. He was appointed head of the CSCE spillover mission to Skopje (1992 to 1994) and then head of the OSCE mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1995–1997). In 1994 he acted as Deputy Special Adviser to the President and Secretary of State for implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords.

a sudden, the Soviet delegation came up with a proposal for a human rights conference to be held in Moscow³³, the Bulgarians envisioned an environmental forum in Sofia³⁴, while the Polish delegation fancied the idea of a cultural forum in Cracow³⁵. To me, it all translated into the fading of the prospect of an economic forum ever being held in Prague, so as you may imagine, at that time, I was extremely dejected.

But setting this aside, did you not say that the changes taking place in Central Europe had infiltrated the proceedings in Vienna, with all their hope and euphoria?

I will end my story about the Vienna Meeting with a concrete, somewhat entertaining episode. When the time came to wrap up the Meeting, my Soviet colleague Yury Kashlev³⁶ [who headed the Soviet delegation to the Vienna Follow-up meeting] was summoned by Gorbachev to return to Moscow. He urged Kashlev to bring the Meeting to a close quickly, so that subsequent steps could be taken, especially in regard to the Human Dimension Conference.

Two countries, however, were a problem: East Germany and Romania. Gorbachev gave instructions to Kashlev, as the head of delegation, to visit both countries and persuade their leaders not to delay the end of the Vienna Meeting any longer and to approve the concluding document, as prepared.

When Kashlev returned from Moscow and briefed our group on his meeting with Gorbachev, he said that he was being sent to Berlin on a precarious mission – to convince Honecker and his entourage to lift their embargo on the end of the Meeting. Milan Kadnár headed the Czechoslovak delegation to Vienna at the time, and with his consent, I asked Kashlev whether he would be able to make a stop in Prague on his way to Berlin, because we felt there could be a certain degree of resentment regarding some of the issues, or at least a reluctance by our leaders to face up to some of these issues. Kashlev reacted jovially by saying: “Aren’t you all – the whole Czechoslovak delegation and your superiors in Prague too – children of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations? Your new Foreign Minister, Jaromír Johanes, is a graduate of that Institute, and the head of the Czech Institute of International Relations, Radek

33 The Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up contains a refreshed definition of the CSCE “human dimension”, as well as a decision to hold three subsequent Human Dimension Conferences: The first was to take place in Paris in 1989, the second in Copenhagen in 1990 and the third in Moscow in 1991. (The agendas, timetables and other organizational modalities are set out in Annex X of the Concluding Document released by the Vienna Follow-up Meeting).

34 The CSCE Meeting on the Protection of the Environment was convened in Sofia from 16 October to 3 November 1989 on the basis of a decision taken during the Vienna Follow-up (see paragraph 37 and Annex IV of the Vienna Concluding Document).

35 This Symposium on the Cultural Heritage of the CSCE Participating States took place in Cracow between 28 May and 7 June 1991 (see paragraph 37 and Annex IV of the Vienna Concluding Document).

36 Yury Borisovitch Kashlev (1934–2006) began his professional and international career at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna between 1957 and 1961. He was then appointed coordinator of the Committee of Youth Organizations of the USSR, a function he held until 1965. Until 1968 he worked for the Communist Party Central Committee and left for Paris ten years later to represent the USSR at UNESCO from 1978 to 1982. When he returned to Moscow, he served as Head of the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1986. That year he was posted to Vienna to head the delegation of the USSR to the CSCE, where he remained until 1989. He was appointed Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1989, and a year later was posted to Warsaw as Ambassador of USSR to Poland (1990–1991) and then representing the Russian Federation (1991–1996). In 1997 Yury Borisovitch Kashlev was appointed Rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

in Bonn³⁸. At that time, the Berlin Wall was being demolished. I brought home a few pieces of it as a souvenir of the day when we took a walk in West Berlin without a problem, despite the fact that we had no visas and were supposed to stay in East Berlin for the meeting.

Towards the very end of my career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I wrote an article entitled “Czechoslovakia and the Helsinki Process”, which was published in the first issue of the monthly magazine *International Relations*³⁹ in 1990. In that article, I contemplated the reasons for our failure to hold the Economic Forum in Prague and other issues related to our negotiations in Vienna. Needless to say, the issue of the Forum continued to bother me a lot.

And now, even though your initial proposal took root and 20 meetings of the Economic Forum⁴⁰ grew out of the seed you planted, do you have second thoughts about what the CSCE could have become or grown into after 1990?

Now, years later, although I do continue to keep abreast of the issues that are familiar to me, I am no longer involved in OSCE events in any way. Nevertheless, I would like to make one last comment. I think that there is still room for raising the subject of economic and environmental cooperation, and indeed a need to do so. I view the OSCE forum as quite unique, in a way. Take the problems of cooperation in energy production – a very “hot” and urgent issue these days. What other forum is more suited and better prepared to handle such issues than the OSCE?

Nothing but mutual aid and cooperation are going to work in today’s world, for who would want to go back to the Cold War era or opt for sparking off an even worse kind of conflict? Yes, apparently, the concept of an OSCE Economic Forum is still alive and well, and that is good, in my opinion. I do believe that the OSCE still provides the best soil for the seeds of economic cooperation and environmental protection, and a unique opportunity for constructive negotiations as well as the achievement of long-lasting results.

Personally, having been active in this field for many years, I would like to see the role of the OSCE strengthened and made able to grow, especially now that the modern globalized world has managed to get itself into such a deep economic and financial crisis.

■■■■

The interview with Jiří Opršal was conducted in Czech on the premises of the Prague Office, on 3 September 2008, by Ms. Alice Němcová.

■■■■

³⁸In accordance with the provisions relating to the conference on Economic Co-operation in Europe contained in annex V of the Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of the CSCE (1989), the Conference took place from 19 March to 12 April 1990.

³⁹“ČSSR a Helsinký Proces” *Mezinárodní Vztahy* 1/1990 ČS. (Published by Revue pro zahraniční politiku SN 0323 1844.)

⁴⁰[It is to be noted that since the establishment of the Economic Forum, all the meetings have taken place in Prague (with the exception of the one in 2010)].

Jiří Opršal

Born in 1932 in the Czech town of Havlíčkův Brod, Jiří Opršal was one of the first two Czechoslovaks to graduate from the Moscow Institute of International Relations. He spent the beginning of his career in the late 1950s at the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, specializing in the francophone countries. In 1962, he was posted to the Czechoslovak embassy in Paris, where he remained until 1968.

His involvement with the CSCE began with the Dipoli preparatory talks in November 1972, when he was appointed Secretary to the Czechoslovak delegation, led at the time by resident Ambassador Oldřich Pavlovský. Mr. Opršal continued in this posting during the Geneva stage of the Conference throughout the Helsinki Summit in 1975. He attended the Follow-up Meeting in



Belgrade as an adviser, and took part in the meeting of experts convened in Valletta in 1979 to consider issues emerging out of the Mediterranean Chapter of the *Final Act*. Later that year, he was appointed to the Czechoslovak delegation that was to attend the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament issues at the United Nations in New York.

On his return from the United States, he was assigned at the Czechoslovak embassy in Brussels (1979–1985) and commuted between Brussels and Madrid for the first part of the second CSCE Follow-up Meeting (1980–1982) taking place in the Spanish capital.

In early 1986, he worked in the Analytical Section of the Office of Foreign Policy, where he focused on the preparation of draft proposals in

the economic and environmental dimension. These were later submitted for discussion at the Vienna CSCE Follow-up Meeting, (1986–1989). Jiří Opršal was promoted to the post of deputy head of the Czechoslovak delegation for the duration of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting.

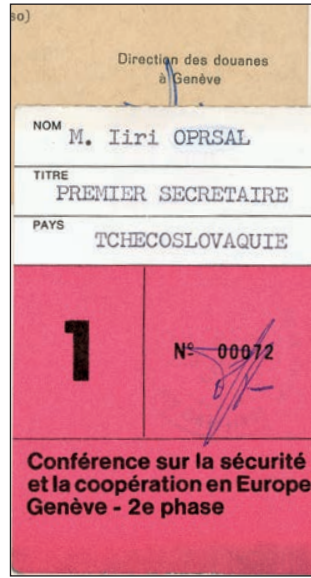
In 1977, writing under a pseudonym, Mr. Opršal authored a booklet explaining the Czechoslovak role in the CSCE process and a number of articles, reflections and studies devoted to the CSCE. Following the fall of the communist regime, he transferred to the private sector, founding a Franco-Czech economic consulting agency. Until 2012, he also presided over the Czech and Slovak Alumni Club of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.



15. 1st row (left to right): Head of the Czechoslovak delegation to Dipoli, ambassador Vratislav Vejnar and his deputy, ambassador Oldřich Pavlovský; 2nd row: advisor Dr. Jiří Pisk, ambassador Dr. Josef Mudroch; 3rd row: advisor Zdeněk Vitek and the delegation's first secretary, Jiří Opršal. (Dipoli, December 1972)



16. Stamp and logo designed especially for the inauguration of the Dipoli multilateral consultations to be devoted to "European Security". (22 November 1972)



17. Jiří Opršal's delegate's badge and a postal seal designed for stage II of the CSCE that took place in Geneva from 11 September 1973 to 22 June 1975.



18. 1st row (left to right): Head of the Czechoslovak delegation to stage II of the CSCE Geneva meeting, ambassador Pavlovský, his deputy ambassador Sobotka and ambassador Mudroch; 2nd row: delegation's first secretary, Jiří Opršal. (Geneva, September 1974)



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PÄÄMINISTERI



BULGARIA TODOR ZHIVKOV
PRESIDENTTI



ESPANJA CARLOS NAVARRO
PÄÄMINISTERI



HOLLANTI JOOP DEN UYL
PÄÄMINISTERI



IRLANTI LIAM COSGRAVE
PÄÄMINISTERI



ISLANTI G HALLGRÍMSSON
PÄÄMINISTERI



ISO BRITANNIA H WILSON
PÄÄMINISTERI



ITALIA ALDO MORO
ULKOMINISTERI



Saksa ERICH HONECKER
PÄÄSIHTI



ITÄVALTA BRUNO KREISKY
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MALTA DOM MINTOFF
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TURKKI SULEYMAN DEMIREL
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UNGARI JANOS KADAR
PÄÄSIHTI



USA GERALD FORD
PRESIDENTTI



20. Commemorative envelope and stamp dedicated to the Helsinki Summit signed by the highest representatives of the Czechoslovak delegation present at the Helsinki Summit, (as mentioned by Jiří Opršal in his interview).



21. Seating order of the Czechoslovak delegation at the Helsinki Summit (left to right): President Gustáv Husák, Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal, Foreign Minister Bohuslav Chňoupek, Ambassador Pavlovský, Deputy Foreign Minister Miloslav Růžek and Secretary of the Party's Central Committee Mikuláš Beňo; 2nd row: Chief of staff of the Prime Minister's cabinet Jan Kolář, Secretary of the Foreign Minister Emil Kebloušek, Vladimír Janků, Vladimír Handl and Jiří Opršal. (31 July 1975)



22.



Ambassador Jacques Andréani of France

In the late 1960s, I was posted at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as *Sous-directeur d'Europe Orientale*, which in English would translate as something like “Assistant Under-Secretary for Eastern Europe”. I was in charge of political relations with the Warsaw Pact countries. So in this function, I participated in various bilateral meetings and exchanges of views at the highest level. I remember clearly that, in these meetings, the Soviets were increasingly pushing for the convening of a conference on European security, and that their focus had us wondering how to respond to such an initiative.

Part of my job was preparing positions regarding this proposal. We were asking ourselves: Should we adopt a purely negative stance? Should we impose conditions? If so, what conditions? Should they be conditions of substance or conditions of procedure? What about the United States? Should we make it a condition *sine qua non* that the United States participate in the conference? After all, the Soviets had described it as a “European conference”. Personally, I was convinced from the start that we had only to mention this as a concern and the Soviets would immediately agree that the United States and Canada should take part in the conference, because they would realize that it was absolutely indispensable for the Western European States.

Consequently, I was producing papers analyzing the motives of the Soviet Union: What did they want? Did they want something which was a sort of substitute for a peace treaty? Did they want confirmation of the division of Germany and formal recognition of the German Democratic Republic, or was there something else they wanted? For instance, there was an idea that maybe one of their aims was to hinder the strengthening of Western European cooperation within the framework of the

European Economic Community (EEC). In other words, they could say: “No, it’s not within the small restricted framework of the EEC that you should be cooperating, but within Europe as a whole ... encompassing both East and West.”

So there were a number of questions and conversations about why they would want such-and-such a thing and how we should respond: Should we just say no, or should we set conditions? Sometimes, it’s better just to reject a proposal by asking for conditions that are impossible to meet, rather than by saying “no” outright.

But the efforts to convene a pan-European security conference (first deployed by the Soviet Union and then by Finland) targeted more than just France, didn’t they?

Absolutely, this is why part of my job also consisted in engaging contacts and consulting with our partners and allies. We had a special bilateral relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany under the Franco-German Treaty,¹ and we knew that the Germans were especially concerned about the implications that the proposed meeting could have. It was clear that behind the topic of European security lay the whole German issue. So, West Germany was also confronted with a number of questions it had to answer: Was it better to attend multilateral conferences and to make an effort towards normalizing relations with the GDR, or was it better to stand by the demands made by the Western allies in the 1950s and 1960s, namely, to hold all-German free elections?

In point of fact, the West Germans had chosen to go for the more pragmatic approach that was the essence of *Ostpolitik*.² For reasons of our own, we in France were also inclined towards adopting a pragmatic position towards Eastern Europe. Our Foreign Minister in the 1960s, Maurice Couve de Murville³, constantly mulled over what might be the outcome of a possible European security conference and what might be in it for the French.

Then in 1970, I was appointed Assistant Permanent Representative of France to NATO. It was in the NATO environment that I took note of the different positions of its member states in terms of the possibility of convening a security conference and the need to find some sort of common approach.

¹ The Élysée Treaty – also known as the “Treaty of Friendship”, signed by German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (for West Germany) and General Charles de Gaulle (for France) in January 1963, established a new foundation for relations between the two countries. The Treaty called for consultations on important questions in various areas of foreign affairs and military matters. The friendship between the two statesmen gave this Treaty its name and became an inspirational symbol of European *rapprochement*.

² Neue Ostpolitik (German for “New Eastern Policy”), or Ostpolitik, refers to a policy in the foreign relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Eastern Europe, (particularly the German Democratic Republic). West German Chancellor Willy Brandt fostered the policy in the early 1970s and in this spirit co-signed the Moscow Treaty

between the FRG and the USSR (12 August 1970), the Treaty of Prague between the FRG and Czechoslovakia (11 December 1973), and the Basic Treaty (*Grundlagenvertrag*) between the FRG and the GDR, which was signed on 21 December 1972 and entered into force in June 1973.

³ Maurice Couve de Murville (1907–1999) was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1958 by General Charles de Gaulle and remained in that post for the following ten years. After May 1968, he served as transitional Prime Minister, a post he resigned from in June 1969, when President Pompidou formed his new government. Couve de Murville continued his political career on the domestic scene as deputy and then senator for the city of Paris (and its metropolitan area) in the French Parliament (1976–1995).

Later, similar harmonization topics started to be discussed within the framework of the EEC Nine, so called because we went from six to nine members with the admission of the United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland at the beginning of 1973. We called this effort *la coopération politique européenne*,⁴ after a brilliant report by the Belgian political Director Étienne Davignon⁵, which established the basis and procedures for European political cooperation.

How did you decide what areas this *coopération politique* should cover and what would be the geopolitical boundaries of such a cooperation?

We asked ourselves similar questions when we started. Basically, the political directors came up with two subjects: Firstly, the Palestinian question, and secondly, the Soviet proposal for holding a European security conference.

We never did anything about the first proposal because it was too thorny a subject. There was profound disagreement between the British, Germans and the Dutch on the one side, and the French and Italians on the other. So we couldn't get off the ground with that. But there was agreement on the CSCE, so the Nine created a committee to focus on that subject.

So the same topic was discussed at the same time within two frameworks – NATO and the EEC Nine. All the members of the Nine (except Ireland) were members of NATO; but even so, the conclusions of the two debates were very different, which is interesting. The obvious reason for that is that the Americans were present in NATO, whereas they were not among the Nine.

As founding members of the EEC, the French had much more influence in the context of the Nine than they did in NATO. The procedures, the style of discussions and of drafting of documents and so on were very much influenced by the French administrative and diplomatic tradition. So we had the interesting situation in which debates on the same issue held within two distinct frameworks had yielded quite different results.

I served as Assistant Permanent Representative of France to NATO from 1970 until the very day on which the Helsinki talks started in Dipoli – 22 November 1972. That, by the way, is my birthday and so the date and the event remain linked and engraved in my mind. At that point, I was put in charge of a small team based at the *Quai d'Orsay* [Foreign Ministry] in Paris, where we were to work out the French position in the planned CSCE preparatory talks. You know how it worked: The Helsinki sessions

⁴ In the late 1960s, economic and political events taking place beyond the borders of Europe gradually made it necessary for the initial six EEC member States to align their foreign policies more closely. At the Hague Summit held on 1 and 2 December 1969, the six EEC Foreign Ministers were instructed to draw up a report on the potential for cooperation in foreign policy. On 27 October 1970, the Ministers met in Luxembourg and adopted the Davignon Report, which laid the foundations for political cooperation among the EEC member States in the area of foreign policy.

⁵ Viscount Étienne F. J. Davignon, a Belgian politician, headed the Cabinets of Prime Ministers Spaak and Harmel from 1959, and as of 1969 he was appointed head of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1967, he was nominated Commissioner of the European Commission, responsible for the internal market and industrial affairs and the customs union until 1970. He then headed the International Energy Agency from 1974 to 1977 and returned to the Commission in 1977, where he was responsible for industrial affairs, energy, the Euratom Supply Agency, research and science until 1985.

were not continuous – there were sessions lasting about four weeks, so my deputy and I alternated. I would go for a session to Helsinki and then I would come back to Paris and he would take my place, while our resident Ambassador, Gérard André, stayed there permanently.

Does that mean that you commuted between Paris and Helsinki while holding your post at the *Quai d’Orsay*?

Most of the issues were handled by the local ambassadors in Finland in 1972. I prepared the reports to the Foreign Ministry in Paris, but, during the Dipoli stage, when I was in Helsinki, I would also conduct negotiations, and during the Geneva stage, I intervened in the various working organs of the Conference and delivered speeches in plenary meetings. Then, when I was back in Paris, I did the reporting and asked for instructions. After that, I sat down and started drafting proposals. This of course diverged a little from the norm, because you would normally have the guy in the capital preparing policy proposals for his superiors, and the instructions would then be sent to the negotiator on the other end.

During the Geneva stage, especially, it was a bit strange because I used to be in Geneva on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and then on Friday we did a sort of summing-up of the week and I would send a telegram to Paris saying: “In view of such-and-such a situation, I would propose such-and-such moves.” Over the weekend, I would travel back to Paris, and on Monday I would send a telegram back to Geneva, saying: “The proposals mentioned in your telegram are accepted by the department and you may carry on.” Looking back, it was a rather peculiar system. I should add that, of course, I didn’t approve my own proposals without talking to my superiors; but even so, it was an unusual way of conducting business.

Did the meetings within the NATO group and the EEC Nine continue during the Geneva stage, and which of the two, from your point of view, offered a more suitable environment for common policy discussions?

The Geneva stage covered a much longer time period and yes, among the EEC Nine, we maintained an extremely tight-knit consulting relationship – very close indeed. All the heads of delegation of the Nine met at least once a week; sometimes they would meet at other consultations in the various related committees and subcommittees to further discuss the issues. By contrast, NATO worked at its headquarters in Brussels, and it worked through its permanent delegations, which received instructions from their governments. That took time – instructions, reports and debriefings went back and forth, and so communication was often protracted.

The Nine worked differently. The political directors – the heads of the various units within their respective ministries – would usually gather in the capital of whichever country had the chairmanship and discuss things face to face. So it was much more direct and it was much easier to achieve a common frame of thought and line of action than it was to try to find a common language and reach mutual understanding through the NATO machinery.

That’s one point. The other point is that our EEC consultations resulted usually in the adoption of written documents – written instructions which we would bestow

upon ourselves. To give an example, the subcommittee dealing with the CSCE would prepare a document of 12 to 15 pages addressing various questions of substance and procedure relating to the current stage of the CSCE negotiations. Then decisions were adopted on each item of the agenda. These decisions would first have to be approved by the political directors; then, in some cases or when deemed necessary, they were forwarded to the foreign ministers for further approval.

So when we went into the meeting room, we had under our arms a set of instructions cleared by the political directors and approved directly by the foreign ministers. This of course strengthened our position, because it made for real and well-founded cohesion. And the third thing was that we were constantly in touch on the spot, at the level of our respective delegations.

I should also mention that the rotation of the EEC Presidency implied for each presidential delegation that it would take charge of numbering the documents – aligning proposals, keeping track of them, circulating them, etc. Most of the work was done in French, because in the first years of political cooperation among the Nine, French was more or less the *lingua franca*. Later on, more and more documents were drafted in English. But anyway, we had a very solid basis for consensus in the EEC group.

If I was to qualify the consultations we had within the NATO framework, I would say that they gave way to a more raw exchange and that they lacked intensity; they were more sporadic and less structured; there was no set of written rules or guidelines, such as we had with the Nine. But of course, we would take part in the meetings – as I said, all the member countries of the EEC (except Ireland), were members of NATO. Consequently, the eight of us would go to the NATO caucus with a position that had been more or less agreed between us in advance. Of course, we had to make some amendments to our proposals, because if the Americans or the Canadians or the Norwegians (who were not members of the EEC), raised a point asking for something important to be changed, we would naturally take their views into account. There were many nuances to this, and of course, there were differences: For example, Italy and France had clear-cut positions on the question of the Mediterranean, while the Germans were constantly preoccupied with the German question. But overall, we managed to agree on the main lines.

There is one more fact we should also bear in mind, and that is that the European Commission sent its delegates to Geneva, since the Commission was the executive body of the EEC. So these EC delegates would be accredited in the delegation of the country that held the Presidency, no matter what their nationality was. This system started in Geneva – it didn't exist yet during the Helsinki consultations. It was funny to see these same guys changing delegations every six months! What's more, these delegates were members of the administration of the European Commission; when they were to speak on questions that fell within the competence of the European Community, they would not express their own views or the views of their national governments, but the views of the Nine.

How did your Eastern partners react to this arrangement?

Well, of course, the Warsaw Pact people were absolutely furious about it, and there was a terrible row. But what is interesting is that the delegations that were most vocal

about this situation were those of East Germany and Romania. They thought that, if the European Community as such were to participate in the discussions, the Soviets could just as well ask for Comecon⁶ to be represented, and that would be the end of everything. I would add that the Romanians were playing a dangerous game. In a sense, they wanted to create conditions enabling the Conference to work in a better way by insisting on a common approach to the rights of all countries, regardless and outside of any alliances. This enhanced the position of the neutrals and the non-aligned and in the end it turned out to be pretty useful. But on the other hand it hindered the capacity for the Soviets to impose a strictly unified view on the Warsaw Pact countries.

In fact, the Soviets didn't insist at all on Comecon getting into the act. Why? Well, it would suffice to enumerate the exclusive responsibilities that the European Community bore – for example, foreign trade, fisheries, customs, some environmental issues. You see, the Soviets were unable to cover such a large array of expertise because, in reality, Comecon did not exist! Comecon was supposed to be a kind of mirror image of the EEC, but in fact it was non-existent. There may have been a few guys sitting in an office in a building somewhere in Moscow, but they had no power; they were compiling statistics and reports on the member countries' economies, but that's about it.

Well, today the EU is still the only other “organization” to be entitled to the microphone within the OSCE negotiating bodies and it has become a widely accepted political reality.

Yes, I understand that the European Union sits in most OSCE negotiations behind the nameplate of its presiding country, and I think that's a good thing. But in those years, there were people in the French Government, and especially the French administration, who were unhappy about that practice.

They thought that only national governments should be given the floor in multilateral gatherings, and that they should speak in their own national capacity. Personally, I was always in favour of there being a representation of the European Commission in the CSCE delegation of the EC country holding the Presidency, but my Government was not. They thought this was a bad thing because the European Commission would take more and more responsibility and would encroach on the prerogatives of nation States – which I think, again, is a good thing, within certain limits, of course.

Could you expand a little more on the participation of the US and Canada? Was their presence the consequence of a “condition *sine qua non*” tabled by France or did it come from the Nine?

It came from everybody, basically. Certainly, I don't think anybody in France would have dreamed of excluding the United States, because the issue before us was “security” as well as “cooperation”. And if you were a NATO ally, even a particularly independent

⁶ “Comecon” is a contraction of the Russian for “Council for Mutual Economic Assistance”, an economic association of East European countries founded in 1949, which to a certain degree could be considered analogous to the European Economic Community. (Also see the interview with Ambassador Alessi, who also speaks of Comecon in Chapter VI).

one like France, you couldn't imagine discussing European security without having the United States present at the negotiating table; it would have been absurd. At the time we felt responsible for the future of Germany – together with the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union. The Four Powers had forces in Germany and in Berlin, so we had an interest in whether there would be an agreement leaving the borders as they were or not. We wanted everything to be signed, sealed and delivered.

In this regard, we also asked for a sentence to be included in the *Final Act* covering the rights of the Four Powers concerning Germany. You can look it up, it is there: "The participating States note that the present declaration does not affect their rights and obligations, nor the corresponding treaties and other agreements and arrangements."⁷ It's a mysterious phrase designed to be understood only by experts, but a lot of participating States understood it too and were furious about this sentence. They pointed out that there was absolutely no reason to assemble 35 countries simply to confirm the rights of only four of them. They would observe that it was not in conformity with the principle of equality among all the participants in the Conference. Everybody had their reasons: The Romanians raised hell about it, and our Italian friends were absolutely mortified because they were not counted among the four "Great Powers", so to speak. There was a lot of fuss about it. But we remained very firm and the Soviets played the game the whole way by backing us up.

Considering that, throughout the mid-1960s, both the French and the Soviet heads of State frequently visited each others' capitals, could one say that, among all the West European countries, France had a privileged relationship with the Soviet Union?

Yes and no. When Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrey Gromyko, came to Paris in 1965, it was the beginning of a sort of a bilateral *détente* between France and the Soviet Union and there were a lot of high-level contacts during those years. Couve de Murville went to Moscow in 1965; de Gaulle made a trip to the Soviet Union in 1966, and Kosygin⁸ also came to France in 1966; and Georges Pompidou, our Prime Minister in those years, went to Moscow in 1967⁹. Then there was a gap between 1968 and 1969 because of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, and it started up again in 1970 with Pompidou's trip to the Soviet Union in his capacity as President. In each of these cases, there was an effort to make it appear that, in spite of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and in spite of a lot of other disagreements we had with the Soviets, there was nonetheless a willingness to cooperate and exchange views. There was a concern for the overall common need in Europe for *détente*. And on the occasion of all these visits, the Soviets would always come back to their proposal for a European conference; it was something like an ongoing refrain.

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⁷ This sentence is a part of Principle X of the *Helsinki Final Act* (§6) and reads: "The participating States, paying due regard to the principles above, and in particular, to the first sentence of the tenth principle, 'Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law', note that the present Declaration does not affect their rights and obligations, nor the corresponding treaties and other agreements and arrangements."

⁸ Aleksey Nikolayevich Kosygin (1904–1980) served as Soviet Premier from 1964 to 1980.

⁹ Also see the interview with Yuri Dubinin, who gives a detailed account of the pre-1970's visits of French and Soviet representatives in chapter VIII.

Did you have a premonition at the time (1975) that the *Final Act* would become such a historically significant document?

By the summer of 1975, we felt we might have set something in motion – that’s true. Then on the other hand, in the following years, the communist regimes tightened their grip on the populations and adopted a harder line towards Western countries. This was the time of the deployment of the SS-20 missiles,¹⁰ the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981. At the same time, we started to see dissident movements emerging here and there, some of which led to the creation of Helsinki citizens’ committees or assemblies, or Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia – the text of Charter 77 made mention of the *Final Act* and the signatories of the Charter were encouraged by what had been agreed in Helsinki. So for many years after the 1975 Summit, you had these two coexisting trends, and it was difficult to predict how they would evolve.

One should not forget, though, that public opinion in Western countries was becoming more sceptical about relaxation in East-West relations. That was true in particular in the United States, where strong criticism of the policy of *détente* was being heard, especially from the Democratic Party. Human rights and the right of Jews in Eastern Europe to emigrate became their battle cry. [Democratic President] Jimmy Carter had been strongly criticized for his “lenient” attitude towards the Soviet Union, so in the light of all this, it was difficult at the time to make a sound judgment about what the Helsinki Accords and the *Final Act* might lead to.

How did the French Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other high dignitaries perceive the CSCE and the involvement of France in the process?

Actually, in the beginning, there was a fair amount of suspicion and even cynicism about the whole thing in some quarters. Take, for instance, Michel Jobert, the French Foreign Minister under Pompidou, who was very popular with the public. He didn’t talk like other political leaders. He made a somewhat strange speech at the CSCE ministerial meeting which took place in Helsinki in July 1973 and which formally opened the Conference. He seems to have misunderstood the Conference. He was obsessed by the idea that Europe would be the victim of some sort of joint plot by the Soviet Union and the United States. He had a fixation that our interests were jeopardized by the presence of the United States. He was constantly suspecting the United States of reaching an agreement with the Soviet Union without us, which is odd because the reality was exactly the contrary – the Conference gave each country the capacity to speak for itself, including those countries which were not part of the Warsaw Pact or NATO. But he didn’t last long in his position and left a few months after making that statement.

As for Pompidou – he was sceptical about almost everything. He was realistic, pragmatic, non-ideological. He didn’t believe that a European conference would yield progress towards peace and *détente*. He thought it was merely a way of fostering good relations with the Soviets, so I suppose he concluded that it couldn’t do any harm,

¹⁰The Soviet SS-20 was an intermediate-range, road-mobile, solid-propellant ballistic missile. Its range was insufficient to threaten the US directly, but all the strategic objectives in Europe could be targeted.

anyway. On the other hand, he did not trust the Germans – he had his doubts about the German Premier, Willy Brandt, and his *Ostpolitik*. And of course, Pompidou's attitude was reflected by the French media, which contributed also to this dubious aura around the CSCE among the French public – the feeling that this was all just words and wouldn't lead to anything of substance.

What about the role of the neutral and non-aligned countries?

Yes, they had their role to play and their word to say. But one should bear in mind that there were two groups among the non-aligned and neutral States. The main group, which really facilitated agreements and in a sense played the role of arbiter, consisted of Sweden, Switzerland and Austria. They were really on the same wave length, and shared the same mood, the same position. The only area they didn't agree on was the Mediterranean, because Bruno Kreisky¹¹ had hard and fast ideas about the Palestinians and the Near East, and the Swedes, as well as the Swiss, did not share his positions.

The other group, which was more non-aligned than neutral, comprised Yugoslavia, Malta and Cyprus. They too had a different point of view. But all the neutrals and the non-aligned were very much motivated by the military side of security – disarmament, confidence-building measures – and they were saying that it was ridiculous to talk about security in Europe and not mention the military aspects of security. We had to admit that they had a point.

So in the end, how was the question of security in the Mediterranean dealt with?

I should mention here that we were all a little taken aback when Tunisia and Algeria sent their representatives to Dipoli during the preparatory consultations and took a public stance claiming it was not consistent with the basic principles of the talks to discuss security in Europe without taking into account the link between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean. They said that they and the many other countries bordering the Mediterranean should be heard and taken into account, so they came to Helsinki, saw a number of delegations during the preparatory talks, and asked that their concerns be considered by the participating States.

Neither the Soviets nor the Americans liked it. But Italy and France and some of the other Mediterranean participants in the Conference, such as Yugoslavia and Malta, came out in support of the two North African countries, so we proposed noting in the final report of the preparatory talks, known as the "Blue Book" that the links between security in the Mediterranean and security in Europe were important and that we suggested that non-participating States contribute to the discussions in Geneva.¹² This in fact took place.

¹¹ Bruno Kreisky (1911–1990) was Austrian Foreign Minister (1959 to 1966), as well as Chancellor (1970 to 1983). In the early 1980s, Kreisky tried to act as a mediator between Israel and the Arab States on the basis of his socialist affiliations and Jewish descent.

¹² See the CSCE Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations, Chapter 2 (§ 28): "In considering questions relating to co-operation in Europe covered by this mandate,

the Committee will bear in mind the relationship which exists between such cooperation in Europe and in the Mediterranean." See also Chapter 3 (§ 57): "States situated in regions adjacent to Europe and to whom reference is made in the provisions of Chapter 2, and in particular those of the Mediterranean States which have already expressed their interest in stating their views to the Conference, are especially envisaged by this Chapter."

Just before the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs took place in Helsinki [3 July 1973], there was a controversy among the delegations of the Nine on the issue. We and the Italians proposed two things: Firstly, that the representatives of non-participating States from the Mediterranean come, speak and answer questions. So Israel, Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco came to Dipoli and were heard by the Coordinating Committee. This meeting was attended only by the heads of delegations.

The second thing we did was to prepare a draft declaration on the issue of the Mediterranean. We had some difficulty in getting this draft through. The Maltese were actually mainly to blame, because they were extremists and unyielding in this matter¹³.

In the end, we succeeded in disposing of this Maltese business by adopting a pledge to discuss the situation in the Mediterranean. The Maltese wanted a resolution calling for more cooperation between the Mediterranean countries with a view to the eventual withdrawal of the military forces of the Soviet Union and the United States from the Mediterranean. Of course, neither the Americans nor the Russians wanted to accept this, but together with the Italians we pleaded and did a lot of lobbying with both the Americans and the Soviets. While the Soviet delegation understood that there had to be some mention of the Mediterranean, the American delegation adamantly opposed it. The deputy head of the US delegation then was John Maresca, an excellent diplomat who wrote a very good book¹⁴ that covered this matter in great detail. Maresca was responsible for this question and he was a very tough negotiator, dead set against this Mediterranean business.

To make a long story short, we managed to persuade [West German Foreign Minister] Hans-Dietrich Genscher to raise the question with Henry Kissinger, the American Secretary of State, since the Federal Republic held the rotating chairmanship of the Nine at the time. Apparently, Kissinger was in a good mood and Genscher convinced him that this question posed no danger and that the resistance of the United States was altogether senseless. So Kissinger graciously agreed to withdraw the US objections, and the troubles with Malta were over¹⁵.

Can you remember any other event that may have created behind-the-scenes tensions between the Western allies and the rest of the participants in the Conference during the second stage in Geneva?

One incident that comes to mind and which caused a certain degree of strain on the participants took place at the beginning of December 1974, at the *Château de Rambouillet*¹⁶. During discussions between Leonid Brezhnev and Valéry Giscard

13 See the interview with Ambassador Evarist Saliba in chapter VII.

14 John J. Maresca, *To Helsinki, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1973–1975* (Duke University Press, 1985). After the *Final Act* was signed in Helsinki, John J. Maresca returned to Washington to head the State Department office responsible for the CSCE. He also attended the first Follow-up Meeting of the CSCE in Belgrade in 1979, and in 1989 he headed the US delegation when the Conference reconvened in Vienna.

15 Also see the interviews with Ambassador Yuri Dubinin, on this episode, chapter VIII; Ambassador Eduard Brinner in chapter IV; Mr. Jiří Opršal in chapter II; and Ambassador Evarist Saliba in chapter VII.

16 The *Château de Rambouillet* is located on the outskirts of Paris and until 2009 served as a secondary presidential residence. It was also a frequent venue for holding high-level political consultations, including the “G6” summit in 1975. (This visit is remembered and also described by Ambassador Yuri Dubinin in Chapter VIII).

d'Estaing about the Conference, Giscard conceded to the Soviets what the Nine and the Americans had long opposed, namely, that the final stage should be held at the top level [i.e. that of heads of State or government rather than foreign ministers]. The Western governments had until then insisted that the level of the third stage must depend on the concessions that the Soviets made on matters of prime importance to the West.

We occupied a sort of “middle of the road” position. Giscard thought that the time had come to facilitate the proceedings because some of the Western delegations were excessively negative. The toughest to reach agreement with appeared to be the Dutch, and the British were also unyielding most of the time. We were criticized by the Italians, the Danes and other partners for this concession, but even so, Giscard deemed it necessary. The Western governments, which were against such a trade-off, later understood why Giscard made this concession on the status of State representatives attending the final stage. It was a way of allowing Brezhnev to conclude a set of negotiations that he considered to be a triumph of his own personal diplomacy and thus, to accelerate the decision-making process.

And in terms of substance, what were the issues of contention that brought the Geneva stage to a standstill in 1974?

The Nine as well as the NATO group had tabled a number of concrete proposals regarding the three “baskets”. In some cases, these had been negotiated effectively: Proposals had been considered; counterproposals had been brought forward; some effort had been made to reconcile the proposals and counterproposals. That is where the neutrals played their conciliatory role. But regarding the third basket, the Soviets had simply refused to discuss certain subjects. They would say that something was out of order, that it was not on the agenda or in the “Blue Book”. They would always pose special conditions before they would just agree to enter into a discussion. They insisted in particular on their famous preambles – they wanted a preamble for each subject, stressing that the sovereignty of the participating States and their right to set their own laws and regulations should remain intact and that anything that would be in contradiction to the principle of non-interference in a nation’s internal affairs would be inadmissible.

There was no negotiation possible on these subjects, except for a few small points here and there. For example, we suggested a wording to be included in chapter 3 of the *Final Act* insinuating that the participating States would facilitate formalities for approving marriages with foreigners. The Soviets said: “No. End of discussion.” We could interpret this as meaning that they didn’t agree with the substance of the proposal or that they simply wouldn’t enter into any negotiations before there was an agreement on preambular language. And we would say: “Well, in that case, let’s put this phrase to which you object between square brackets and if there are elements of language that you propose and that we don’t agree with, we will also put them between square brackets. At the end of the negotiations we will try to remove the square brackets and find common language acceptable to both sides.”

But the Soviets wouldn’t go along with that; the use of square brackets was simply unacceptable to them. Then the Nine resorted to laying down the condition that,

unless all our proposals had been subjected to what we called a “first reading”, there would be no conclusion in sight. In other words, we wanted to get the Soviets in a position to discuss issues seriously with a view to finding a common language and coming as close as possible to a consensus on the subjects we had tabled. We wanted to achieve that by taking advantage of the pressure of time, because we knew the Soviets were in a hurry to end the Conference and hold the Summit.

We thought that by adopting such a firm stance, we could prod the Soviets into making the necessary concessions. The Americans did not agree with this approach. Or rather, when I use the word “the Americans” I have one man in mind in particular – Henry Kissinger. We saw very well that our friends in the American delegation were more or less in agreement with our views and they thought we should stand firm. But Kissinger said that this was ridiculous, that we were asking for far too much, and that we were going into details that were of absolutely no importance. The third basket was very nice in principle, but it was something that had no effective value. He would say: “Do you imagine that because a few dozen copies of the *New York Times* will be sold in the streets of Moscow, the Soviet regime will change?”

So he advised us to restrict ourselves to a few points, and to keep insisting on those few points, be they issues included in the third basket or in the political and military fields. We didn’t talk a lot about those subjects, but they were especially important for the Americans and the British. In other words, Kissinger was saying that we should reduce our position to maybe five or ten main points, and if the Soviets accepted those points, we should relinquish the rest of our arsenal of proposals and let the Soviets have their summit.

Most of the time, the majority of the NATO delegations tacitly accepted the position of the Nine on matters pertaining to the CSCE; so for once the Americans found themselves isolated. Even so, there was a logic in Kissinger’s position. For instance, it is true that we had tabled too many proposals and that some of them were too detailed and very difficult to negotiate. So, in the end, everybody pitched in and pulled together. While we insisted on the serious negotiation of some of our proposals, not all of them needed to be dealt with in detail. The Americans stopped pressing for negotiation on only a few selected points and accepted the common position of the Europeans. However, they still wanted to stop postponing the conclusion of the proceedings indefinitely and to find ways of pushing the negotiations forward.

A common position was found somewhere in between. The Americans understood that we had to get some firm commitments on some of the main points in the third basket, and they did what they could to convince the Soviets to play ball over that. There were a number of questions which were discussed and settled bilaterally by Kissinger and Gromyko. On the other hand, Kissinger was wrong in the sense that, if we had followed his advice, we would have abandoned some quite valuable proposals which were accepted in the end. But he was right inasmuch as this Conference could not go on indefinitely, because it would lose its value in the eyes of the public. Moreover, we too were wrong in insisting too much on a thorough discussion of each particular point, although we were right in saying that we absolutely had to get some results – that we couldn’t discard our main proposals just because the Soviets wouldn’t discuss them. So, the truth was somewhere in between.

Is there a definite moment in time or a specific incident when you felt like you were standing at a landmark or a turning point in history?

Well, one day that I remember with great pride is 15 January 1973, during the preparatory talks in Dipoli. That was the day on which the Nine submitted their joint proposals for the mandates of the various commissions and subcommissions of the Conference itself. We had submitted our suggestions for the structural and organizational aspects of the Conference even earlier during the consultations. And so, by January, the Nine had drafted a series of proposals covering all the agenda items, and on the 15th, they submitted them to the plenary¹⁷. The Italians proposed the first basket¹⁸, the Belgians the second¹⁹ and the Danes the third²⁰. The Belgians proposed the second because they held the Presidency of the EEC at the time, and it was proper that the basket concerning the economic field should be tabled by the delegation which held the EEC Presidency.

What was notable about this was that these proposals were clearly not solely Belgian, Danish or Italian; rather, they were the joint proposals of the Nine. And when everybody says today that there is no common foreign policy and no possibility of a common foreign policy for the current European Union, it is quite clear that, at least from 15 January 1973 and up until the end of the Conference in 1975 – but probably even up to the end of the Paris Summit in 1990 – there was indeed an *entente* on these subjects or at least proof of a common policy. This policy was absolutely clear and was based on highly structured consultations on the adoption of common documents by the foreign ministers and the heads of State. Each delegation of course had its own axe to grind – all of them had certain points on which they intended to insist – but on the whole, the common policy was real, and the national delegations hardly deviated from it. While there may have been a few digressions, these were not crucial ones. That was a very important factor and so I must say I took great satisfaction in having personally played a role in the shaping of this common viewpoint.

Another memory goes back to the day when the Swiss Ambassador, Samuel Campiche, came out with the formula of the “three baskets”. (Actually, he didn’t say “three” – I think he said just “baskets”.) He said: “We have all these proposals and we should sort them out and put them in various baskets according to their subject.” It was a way of circumventing the question of how many items would be on the agenda – whether there would be two, three or four. So instead, he talked about “baskets”.

How would you describe the public’s reaction to the *Final Act* in France?

After 1975, the general opinion was that we had satisfied ourselves with quite mediocre results – and handed the Soviets what they had wanted from the start without

17 “Plan of organization of work of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe”, submitted by the Ambassador of France (HC/12/72, registered 14 December 1972), and its addendum regarding the creation of a coordinating committee (HC/12/Add.1, registered 13 March 1973).

18 Proposal made by Italy regarding the agenda item: “Questions of security; committee and subcommittees” (HC/18/73, registered 15 January 1973).

19 Embassy of Belgium: Proposal regarding the agenda for CSCE committees and subcommittees on co-operation in the fields of economics and environment (HC/17/73, registered 15 January 1973).

20 Proposal made by Denmark regarding the agenda item: “Development of human contacts, broadening of cultural and educational exchanges and wider flow of information”; committee and sub-committees (HC/19/73, registered 15 January 1973).

gaining anything of great value in exchange. But I was convinced of the contrary. I thought that what we had obtained was not so bad and that it was a breakthrough in some ways. Most of the press as well as some of my colleagues in the Foreign Ministry disagreed with this point of view.

You also have to take into consideration the general mood in the other Western countries at that time. Many people were saying it was another betrayal, that we had handed the Soviets recognition of what they had seized after the war without putting up a fight. Even in France, I knew of many people who thought that way.

You have to realize that, during that period, the outlook of the French public regarding the situation in the Soviet Union had changed quite a bit – especially among left-leaning people. The socialists and those to the left of the socialists had been sympathetic to the Soviet Union for historical reasons, but because of Solzhenitsyn, the gulags and so on, their views evolved between 1973 and 1974.

I was frankly not too proud of the French stance towards the Eastern bloc in those years – we were much too timid on the question of dissidents. Giscard d’Estaing wouldn’t grant asylum to any dissident because of diplomatic protocol, but public pressure and public opinion had forced him to change his position in this regard. At the *Quai d’Orsay* we had a traditional doctrine according to which we shouldn’t press the authorities of a totalitarian State for the solution of difficult personal cases, and this applied not only to the Soviet Union, but also to all the dictatorships.

We were very careful, because it was thought that to be pushy would turn out to be counterproductive – people and governments were jealous of their own sovereignty and insisted on non-interference, so they did not like to be bothered with, or reminded of, matters falling under their own competence. We all said we didn’t want other countries to interfere in our own internal affairs, so, in turn, we adopted this doctrine towards the others. And sometimes we even had to fight our own leaders. Even as Director of European Affairs at the French Foreign Ministry, I had to plead for a little more public expression of concern about human rights, about all the dissidents who were in psychiatric asylums in the Soviet Union and elsewhere.

But we were engaged in *détente*, so we had to be careful. The official doctrine was that we could exert very discreet pressure, yes, but that it had to remain confidential, not made public or accessible to the press, because in some cases that would have created an adverse effect.

You wrote a book²¹ about the CSCE a few years ago on the possible relation between the Helsinki Accords and the demise of communism; did you turn a page on this chapter of your diplomatic career by writing this book?

None of us thought that the Soviet Union and the entire communist system in Europe would disappear so soon. We thought that Helsinki would push the system to evolve in a good sense and would encourage the opponents of the Soviet system, and that is indeed what happened ... but we underestimated the impact that it would have.



²¹ Jacques Andréani: *La piège: Helsinki et la chute du communisme*, (Éditions Odile Jacob, Paris, 2005).

Conference, and a very good man, suggested that we do exactly that. That is, take the Helsinki principles and the idea of the Helsinki process and apply them to the situation in the Middle East. But I'm sorry to say, I don't think too much of that idea. Because the point of departure for Helsinki was disagreement on a number of other issues, including the division of Germany into two States and the theoretical non-recognition – but the *de facto* recognition – of the GDR and its borders by the West. The question was simply: "Should we write and sign a declaration that these frontiers shall endure indefinitely and shall never change, and can we write in our documents that the States in Europe as they are – their political, economic and social systems – should remain as they are?" So this was a situation in which we had to face the facts – we didn't pretend that the GDR didn't exist – and we agreed not to use force to change this reality.

But the situation in the Middle East is very different. There are a lot of countries that simply deny the right of the State of Israel to exist. For its part, the State of Israel certainly does not embrace or commit to the obligation not to use force (as enshrined in the *Final Act*) in its territorial disputes. So you see, the departure point for the Middle East is quite different. The Helsinki process would be fine in the Middle East after the negotiations among these States resume and at least some of the unresolved questions have been addressed. Besides, I'm not sure that in the Middle East the problem we are confronted with is really the issue of human rights, freedom of movement, freedom of information and all that. You see, all these values are as important to the people in the Middle East as they are in the rest of the world, but they're not the people's main concern. So, I'm not convinced that implanting the CSCE in such an environment is a good idea and I don't even think it's feasible. You will not get all these people together around the table to adopt principles aimed at promoting good relations between them, I really don't think so.

Just to take the structural model – the Helsinki model as a whole, the process, the three baskets, the list of principles – and try to apply it to the Middle East or other situations is neither realistic nor viable. On the other hand, some of the Helsinki institutions and procedures could be put to good use. The idea of confidence-building measures, for example, is something that could very well be used as a means of diminishing the mutual fear of a military standoff; so too is the idea of the Conference on Disarmament,²⁵ which is a sort of offspring of the CSCE.

I could very well see a disarmament treaty limiting certain kinds of armaments in the whole area of the Middle East in order to prevent something like the Iran-Iraq War. It would be extremely difficult, of course, but the model of the CSCE could serve as a toolbox from which instruments could be taken and used in the context of a political agreement.

I was never in favour of the American policy under George W. Bush, of the "forced

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²⁵ The United Nations Conference on Disarmament (CD) was established in 1979 as the multilateral disarmament negotiating forum for the whole of the international community. The terms of reference of the CD include practically all issues relating to arms control and

disarmament. It succeeded other Geneva-based UN negotiating forums, which include the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1960), the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1962–1968), and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (1969–1978).

democratization” of the whole Middle East. I thought that it was a naive policy and that it would be self-defeating, as it indeed proved to be. But if there are opportunities to improve things, then why not seize them? For example, it is obvious that a country like Iran deserves other leaders than the ones it has, but that doesn't mean that you should organize a *coup d'état*. You have to be more patient and subtle.

What other areas do you think the OSCE could be concentrating on today?

I think there are two main problems the OSCE should be tackling. The first one is the whole question of the strategic situation – everything that relates to the implementation or renegotiation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.²⁶ Because, ever since the Russians declared that they are no longer bound by this Treaty, there has been a void. This is perhaps priority number one for the OSCE to concentrate on. The *Final Act* doesn't provide any solutions to this question, since the idea of an overall arrangement on conventional disarmament did not exist when we signed it. That came later with the meeting in Stockholm²⁷ and with the meeting and negotiations in Vienna.²⁸ So what should we do? I don't know. It's a good question!

And then at the other end of the spectrum is the whole complex of local situations, and in many of these, the OSCE has done a good job and is still being very useful. You cannot do away with all the bad things that happen on the face of the earth. But if, in some areas and some regions of the world and in some countries, there is a little more freedom, a little more tolerance, then I think the world may be a better place. And why should one not make that one of the aims of political activity? Not the only aim, of course, because you have to take into account the economic or strategic interests of your own people, of your nation; but if there is also some possibility of progress towards a more balanced society, then why not?



The interview with Ambassador Andréani was conducted in English on the premises of the Prague Office, during two sessions on 26 and 27 January 2010, by Alice Němcová.



²⁶ The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed on 19 November 1990 in Paris, by 22 States on the margins of the CSCE Paris Summit. The Treaty is regarded as the cornerstone of conventional stability and security from the Atlantic to the Urals and is the product of five years of negotiation on force limitations conducted within the framework of the then CSCE. The CFE treaty is a legally binding agreement. Russia suspended its obligations under the Treaty in 2007.

²⁷ The Stockholm stage of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures was held from 17 January 1984 to 19 November 1986.

²⁸ The first stage of the Vienna Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures lasted from 9 March 1989 until 4 March 1992. The Negotiations on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe were also held in Vienna between 9 March 1989 and 10 July 1992.

Jacques Andréani

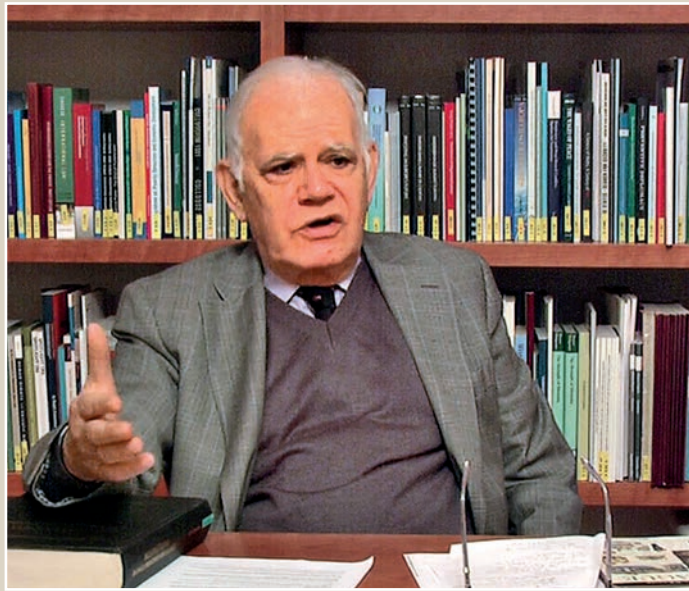
Born in Paris in 1929, Jacques Andréani graduated from the Institute of Political Studies (*Sciences Po*) and the National School of Administration (*ENA*) in Paris. After entering the French diplomatic service, he spent five years in Washington as Secretary of the French embassy.

He was assigned to the French embassy in Moscow between 1960 and 1962, which were the years when the Berlin Wall was being erected (1961) and the Cuban missile crisis escalated in October 1962. After his time in Moscow, Ambassador Andréani spent the following six years in Paris, where he was first in charge of relations with the Soviet Union, and then later of relations with the Warsaw Pact countries, as Assistant Under-Secretary for Eastern Europe. In 1970, he joined the representation of France to NATO as Assistant Permanent Representative.

His initial involvement in the CSCE process lasted from the very beginning of the Dipoli consultations in November 1972 until the signing of the *Final Act* in Helsinki, in August 1975. He led the French negotiating team at the preparatory talks in Dipoli and he headed the French delegation during the second phase in Geneva (1973–1975). He attended the Helsinki Summit in 1975 with French President Giscard d'Estaing in his capacity as Director of European Affairs, a position he held until 1979.

Jacques Andréani continued his diplomatic career as French Ambassador to Egypt from 1979 to 1981. That same year, President Mitterrand asked him to take the post of Director of Political Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, an assignment he kept for three years before being named Ambassador to Italy in 1984. After four years in Rome, he returned to Paris to become the Chief of Staff to Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

In 1989, Ambassador Andréani was appointed to head the French embassy in Washington,



where he remained until 1995. He officially retired in 1997, but was entrusted a number of times after that with a series of missions by the President of the Republic or the Foreign Minister, particularly in the Middle Eastern countries. In 2000, he was also asked to represent France in the negotiating with the US government the terms of an agreement on the compensation of the despoliation of Jewish banking assets during the Nazi occupation of France.

He has lectured on international relations at the University of Clermont-Ferrand (1996–1997), the Johns Hopkins University - Baltimore and at Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Bologna Center in Washington, D.C. (1997–1998). He pursued his academic activities from

2000 to 2005 at the Guido Carli Free International University for Social Studies (LUISS) in Rome.

Ambassador Andréani is a member of the *Club de Monaco*, a fairly recent civil society think tank founded by French diplomat Claude de Kemoullaria in partnership with the Italian Institute for International and Political studies (ISPI) and the the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI).

Ambassador Andréani authored three books with Odile Jacob Publisher in Paris: *L'Amérique et nous* (2000), *La piège: Helsinki et la chute du communisme* (2005) and *Identité Française* (2012).

He holds the French National Order of the Legion of Honour, as well as the distinction of the French National Order of Merit.

Conference for Security and
Co-operation in Europe

First Meeting of the
Conference on the Human Dimension



Paris
30 May - 23 June 1989

23.



24. Four major CSCE key players as well as representatives of NATO member States: Sir Harold Wilson of Great Britain, President Gerald Ford of the USA, President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing of France and Prime Minister Helmut Schmidt of the Federal Republic of Germany. (Helsinki, 30 July 1975)



25. (Left to right) President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Jean Sauvagnargues, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Claude Pierre-Brossolette, Secretary General of the President's office and ambassador Gérard André appointed to Finland. Opening session of the Helsinki Summit. (30 July 1975)



26.



Ambassador Edouard Brunner of Switzerland

I first became connected with the CSCE during 1972, when we were being sounded out by the Soviets regarding whether we would be ready to participate in a possible “pan-European” conference. At the time, we suspected that the Soviets – having always had a very notary-like character – wanted to get all their gains from World War II down on paper, or at least to render them irreversible. So, essentially, what we saw behind this conference was their intention to make it a substitute for the peace treaty that had never been signed with Germany.

At the time, I was in the department of the Swiss Foreign Ministry that was responsible for Europe. The head of that department entrusted the project for this “pan-European” conference to Rudolf Bindschedler¹, who was our primary legal adviser and who became the head of our delegation at the Dipoli Consultations. He was an excellent choice because he was a broad-minded man with a very sharp political sense. He was to form a team and asked me to be his number two, an offer that I accepted readily because I was very much interested in the subject. So he told me: “Choose two colleagues that you want and believe are suitable.” I took Blaise Schenk and Hans Jörg Renk on board.

¹Dr. *iuris* Rudolf Leo Bindschedler (1915–1991) started out his career as a young lawyer for the Federal Political Department (now DFA), and acted as head of the legal department as of 1950. From 1961 to 1980 he worked as legal counsel of the Political Department in matters such as Public International Law, neutrality and security policy of Switzerland, European integration issues, peaceful settlement of international

disputes and the protection of investments abroad. He was elected to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, as a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 1963. Ambassador Bindschedler assisted to all the three stages of the CSCE and took a leading role in the subsequent expert meetings on the peaceful settlement of disputes. (Montreux 1978 and Athens 1984).

Mr. Bindschedler, these two colleagues and I started to think about what response we should give to this Soviet invitation, and if we accepted, whether we could “set conditions” for our participation in the consultations. We went to the archives, and retrieved and studied documents dating back to the beginning of the century to find out how similar conferences in the past might resemble what the Soviets had in mind. We especially scrutinized those concerning the meeting Tsar Nicholas had convened at The Hague², at the beginning of the twentieth century. We looked at how people had behaved at the time, and how it had all been put into action.

What we discovered was that the invitation to participate in the first Tsarist-era conference at The Hague had come from two countries. Just like the Soviets of 1972, the Russians at the time didn't want to be alone in issuing the invitation. So it was the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Montenegro that jointly invited representatives to gather in The Hague. I'm citing this because it is a good example of the Russians' continuity of thought: “Let's issue a joint invitation so as not to be the only ones sticking our necks out.” The second question that was asked in 1899 was whether to invite non-European countries. It was a question that was asked in respect of this pan-European gathering too: Should we not also invite the United States of America and Canada?

So what eventually made the Swiss government decide to take part in the Conference?

Our decision was taken on the basis of the following considerations. Given that we weren't part of the United Nations, it was in our interest to be present at the proposed conference. That was the first point. The second point was that, since we hadn't participated in World War II, we couldn't and wouldn't participate in something that was supposed to be drafting what was more or less a substitute for a peace treaty, so from our point of view, it was necessary that this proposed conference have another point or goal than the one the Soviets had in mind. And although this might seem strange on our part, the third condition we came up with was that the United States and Canada must participate. We thought that a conference without the participation of these two countries would be totally unbalanced in favour of the Soviet Union, and that France, Great Britain and West Germany would be “outgunned”.

So we started holding a number of bilateral meetings. We visited several East and West European countries and we also received various delegations in Switzerland. People started to realize that our interest in this undertaking was genuine. For example, a German delegation came to ask us for help in introducing German as an official language of the proposed conference. Why? Because at that time, German was not an official language and if we left the line-up of Russian, English, and French, then the delegates from the GDR would most probably use Russian, and the West German representatives would have to use French or English, which would symbolically confirm

²Tsar Nicholas II of Russia convened an International Peace Conference at The Hague in the Netherlands in 1899, which had as its aim the revision of the declaration concerning the laws and customs of war elaborated in 1874 by the Conference of Brussels (but which had not yet been ratified). The convention on land warfare and regulations thereof elaborated during the First Conference were revised at the Second International Peace Conference in 1907.

the division of Germany. Since there weren't many German-speaking countries to defend this cause, it was indispensable for the Germans to get the support of the Swiss. While we said OK, we added: "but if we support your request as a German-speaking country, we must also account for our third national language, which is Italian." So to make a long story short, it was we who asked for Italian, not Italy!

After that, we had quite important meetings with a number of Soviet delegations; notably, Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Kovalev³ came to Bern to discuss Swiss involvement in the conference-to-be. We explained that simply signing something that resembled a peace treaty by another name was of no interest to us, but what did interest us was that we should establish rules of conduct for those countries that were going to participate in the conference. At the time, we still didn't know who that would be.

We were aware that these rules were not going to become mandatory in terms of existing international law. In other words, they would not be legally binding. They would be rules of a political nature, a sort of codex. The head of our delegation, Rudolf Bindschedler, made an important remark to Deputy Minister Kovalev to this effect. He said: "While I cannot speak in the name of the International Council of Jurists, I do think that the legal or a legal character of what we are going to sign is not so very crucial, because, if it is signed at the highest level [heads of State or government], of it will be politically significant and trustworthy enough. Besides, one of the most important post-war documents, the Potsdam Agreement⁴, wasn't legally binding either, and nevertheless, it determined a lot of things that happened in Europe after the war."

So we had accepted in advance the fact that the document that was going to be signed would not be legally binding, but to this we added another precondition: After the document was signed, it would have to stay "alive", in the sense that the commitments the document contained were to be submitted to verification at regular intervals and some sort of renewed guarantee had to be given that the guiding principles were being respected by the countries that had signed them. It turned out that our conditions meshed with those foreseen by the Soviets, who were also in favour of having a follow-up meeting when the conference had ended, even if they had different reasons for it. Their long-term vision was to establish a type of European council, in which they would play a major role and act as a counterweight to the United States.

³ Anatoly Gavrilovich Kovalev (1923–2002) graduated from MGIMO and worked for several years in Germany at the Soviet Control Commission. He was appointed to assist Andrey Andreievich Gromyko, as Deputy Foreign Minister in 1971. As such, he headed the delegation of the USSR in Dipoli 1972–1973 and Geneva 1973–1975. He remained in the post of Deputy Foreign Minister until 1986, when he became head of the planning section of the foreign policy department of the Soviet and then Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1991.

⁴ The Potsdam Agreement (17 July–2 August 1945), was foreseen to follow up on the discussions that had begun

at Yalta (February 1945), and while the Allies remained committed to fighting a joint war in the Pacific, the lack of a common enemy in Europe led to difficulties in reaching a consensus concerning post-war reconstruction in Europe. President of the United States Harry Truman, Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party Joseph Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (replaced by Clement Attlee after the UK general elections on 12 July 1945) met in Potsdam during these two weeks to negotiate a set of provisions regarding the political and economic repercussions as well as the military consequences and occupation of Nazi Germany and European reconstruction.

When we suggested that the United States should join the negotiations, they accepted right off the bat. They were in too much of a hurry for their conference to start to be concerned with such a formality. At that point, they also indicated that the invitation would undoubtedly come from the Finnish Government for a relatively simple reason: It was only in Helsinki that the two German States could be represented at exactly the same levels, because the Finns' attitude to both of the German States was equally non-committal.

And from the domestic point of view, how did the Swiss authorities and the public respond to the prospect of Switzerland taking part in such an event?


We of course had to inform the authorities of these visits and we were also accountable to the Swiss public as regarded our position in the talks. We started by persuading those who were interested in the problem—the commissions of foreign affairs of both houses of Parliament. We resorted to viable reasons for participation that the Swiss would embrace as their own. These reasons boiled down to two specific elements that we promised we would include in any agreement foreseen for signature. The first element was the recognition of the concept of neutrality – not just Swiss neutrality, but the fact that neutrality was a position and a policy for the world to recognize. The second was another old Swiss idea – that of establishing a system for the peaceful resolution of international disputes.

These two elements were totally acceptable to Swiss public opinion. And, as we found out five years later, both political majorities, the left and the right, were in favour of Swiss involvement in the conference. The left liked the idea that Switzerland had finally taken its place on the international stage and was to play a role in this process, while the right-wing parties surprisingly approved of the fact that we had adopted positions on the issues of human rights and freedom of information, concepts which were very firmly libertarian and very pro-democracy.

So once your participation had been confirmed and you set off for Finland, what other countries were represented at the Dipoli Consultations?

In the end, everyone was invited: Canada, the United States, and all the European countries. Everyone accepted except for Albania. Albania wanted to have periodic updates on the CSCE. The Ambassador said: “Even though we are not members and even though we don't believe in what is a conspiracy between the United States and the USSR, we are nevertheless interested in how it evolves.” I don't really know why they chose Switzerland to convey the information, but that is how they remained out of the loop until the early 1990s⁵.

On the first day of the consultations, I questioned a Soviet colleague, Lev Mendelevich (an outstanding diplomat with whom I became friends later on). I asked him: “Why


⁵ The Albanian Government made an official request to the Chairman of the CSCE, H. D. Genscher, to be admitted to the CSCE as a participating State on the occasion of the first

CSCE Council of Ministers meeting in Berlin, on 19 June 1991.

didn't you invite Belarus and Ukraine, who are members of the United Nations?"⁶ He had a very honest response. He told me: "You know very well why they are at the United Nations. We have no need for them here. You see, the rules we want to establish here – those concerning borders, for example – won't matter with respect to relations between Russia and the other republics of the USSR."

The Helsinki consultations in 1972 were to be held at the ambassadorial level, meaning they were to be a meeting of ambassadors who were officially posted in Helsinki. But these people were not all political "aces", so to speak. However, the same could not be said of the Soviets. The Soviet delegation was composed of three other important personalities. There was First Deputy Minister Kovalev, who headed the delegation; Lev Isaakovich Mendeleevich,⁷ whom I mentioned previously; and Second Deputy Foreign Minister Valerian Zorin – an anxious, sneaky character who was rather dangerous to my mind. And then there was Viktor Maltsev⁸. This man was built like a tank and rejoiced in a particular sense of humour. One day he told us with a perfectly straight face: "You know, before being appointed ambassador to Sweden, I was the prefect of a region in Siberia that's as big as Europe." The French ambassador, who was a part of our small assembly, responded: "Basically prefects in your country have similar functions as they do in our country, isn't that so?" Maltsev retorted, "Yes, but there is a notable difference. In your country, a prefect is appointed by the government, while in our country he is elected by the people!" Such was the mood in Helsinki at the beginning of the 1970s.

Was there an agenda foreseen or procedures agreed upon for this non-committal gathering – or were you just to talk about the possibility of holding a security conference?

Well, to start with, it was necessary to establish some ground rules, in the sense that we needed to know how decisions would be taken. We also needed to know whether we were going to keep a record of the debates, whether there should be a secretary, etc. To everybody's surprise, one delegation played a key role in this respect. Ambassador Valentin Lipatti, who represented Romania, spoke excellent French and was surrounded by very capable Romanian jurists armed with a highly litigious spirit, so the discussions were very lively. Thus, we established a certain number of important procedural guidelines. In particular, it was decided that decisions would be taken unanimously, with a right for each of the participants to express reservations on certain parts of a proposed decision without breaking the consensus rule.

⁶ After World War II, Belarus and Ukraine were given their own seats in the United Nations General Assembly, together with the Soviet Union. This was part of a deal with the United States to ensure a degree of balance in the General Assembly, which the USSR asserted was skewed in favour of the Western bloc.

⁷ Lev Isaakovich Mendeleevich served from 1968 to 1970 as the deputy head of the Soviet delegation to the UN in New York and held the title of Soviet Ambassador-at-Large from 1972 to 1984.

⁸ Viktor Fedorovich Maltsev (Malt'sev) completed his studies at the Moscow Academy of Railroad Transportation in 1954 and from that date until 1961 he served as Deputy Director of the East Siberian Railroad. Maltsev was Secretary of the Irkutsk Oblast Executive Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1963 to 1966. In 1967, he was appointed ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Sweden for five years, after which he assumed the post of Soviet ambassador to Finland (May 1971).

of information, freedom of movement, reunification of families and the need for these freedoms to be recognized for each and every citizen in the CSCE area. Nonetheless, we also knew that all this would be of no value if we could not assure some type of follow-up to make sure that what had been agreed upon was being implemented.

What were the main lines you had set out for yourselves while drafting the Final Recommendations and how did they translate in practice in Geneva?

Our idea for the final document was for it to have four sections¹²: The agenda; established dates for follow-ups that could be general or specific; and confirmation of everyone's participation by signatures. We would then have to evaluate the completeness of the document and provide for an annex in which experts would set forth their suggestions on the peaceful settlement of disputes.

To organize the work, we established as many committees as there were chapters, so four, with a few subcommittees. We very quickly saw that, for the Soviet side and their allies, emphasis was placed on the first basket. In other words, the Ten Principles, and above all the principle of the inviolability of borders. So, once they had this inviolability of borders in a form that was acceptable to us, they were free to make concessions. That's what happened. It wasn't an inviolability of borders that reckoned with some kind of inalterability. It was an inviolability that really meant what it said, which means it couldn't be changed by force, but it could be changed by mutual consent. This was expressly stated in the Ten Principles.

In this particular area, we had more problems with the Westerners during the second stage in Geneva. I'll tell you about one incident to illustrate the problem. One day, the Italian representative to this committee came to see us in order to tell us: "You have the following problem: The French delegation, on the instructions of Mr. Sauvagnargues¹³ himself, wants to introduce at the end of the Ten Principles a sentence that would read: 'All these principles are valid between countries, unless special arrangements have been made between them'." It was all about Berlin, but the sentence could be interpreted in a few different ways. The Soviets, for example, saw in this an opportunity to advance the "Brezhnev Doctrine"¹⁴. We responded to the French: "If you have a problem with Berlin, then treat it individually." But the Germans didn't want Berlin to be explicitly mentioned in the *Final Act*. Italy came and told us, "As we are allies of France, we can't really oppose this proposal; the Americans are not moving, as it seems all the same to them, and the British will not oppose the French on this point either. So our only chance is if you, the neutral and non-aligned countries, oppose this sentence." When the time came for us to take the floor, well advised by this clever counsel, we said that we were not prepared to accept a nondescript qualification of these Ten Principles, and the French had to give in. The Russians, who were not demanding – who seemed not

¹² The titles of these four chapters were formulated as follows: "I) Questions Relating to Security in Europe; II) Cooperation in the Fields of Economics, of Science and Technology and of the Environment; III) Cooperation in Humanitarian and Other Fields; and IV) Follow-up to the Conference.

¹³ Jean Sauvagnargues (1915–2002) served as Minister of Foreign Affairs under Valéry Giscard d'Estaing from 1974 to 1976.

¹⁴ This term is used in reference to the Soviet foreign policy conducted by Leonid Breznev as of the late 1960s. In an article published in *Pravda* on 28 September 1968, entitled "Sovereignty and the International Obligations of Socialist Countries" Anatoly Kovalev explained the notion of doctrine in more depth.

to be demanding – simply had to live with this. So it's in this way that the neutral and non-aligned countries prevented the introduction of the “Brezhnev Doctrine” into the Ten Guiding Principles.

And how does the chapter on “questions relating to security and co-operation in the Mediterranean” fit into all this?

Well, the Mediterranean dimension of the CSCE is a story of its own. The question we were grappling with at first was whether it was really necessary to provide for specific rules for Mediterranean countries. Some of the Mediterranean countries, Malta in particular, seemed to be very much in favour of talks on the subject. Naturally, there was great opposition from the northern countries and even more from the Soviet Union, which disapproved of this new element that complicated the already complex relations between the East and the West.

Most of all this stemmed from existing problems in the Middle East and North Africa, which were not easy to solve and even less easy to insert into the framework of the CSCE. But we all knew we couldn't debate security and cooperation in Europe while ignoring the interests of the Mediterranean community. The Soviets, being a major power, and from a country bordering on the Black Sea, were of course also interested.

Despite the efforts of some parties to stop the negotiations, at the insistence of the Maltese, and Dom Mintoff in particular, we managed to fit in a fifth section on Mediterranean affairs. This didn't prove very interesting, unfortunately. It didn't reach its full potential because the question was being dealt with elsewhere. There were other platforms where negotiation could lead to more effective results. In fact, the main problem in the Mediterranean was the conflict in the Near East, one which the CSCE couldn't attempt to tackle or resolve. Not to speak of the withdrawal of the American and Soviet fleets from the Mediterranean. This issue was naturally out of bounds for the Americans, as well as for the Soviets. At one point, we even made the people from Malta, who were close to Dom Mintoff, come, in order to convince them and put them under pressure! And one interesting thing was that the pressure was coming from both the Westerners and the Russians at the same time, together; They all wanted to convince those unhappy Maltese.

Did you get to know the Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff personally?

I never got to know him personally, but I heard a lot of things about him and witnessed his interventions. He was a leading figure, or the father of Maltese independence. As a unionist, he had leftist convictions, and from what I know, Malta is a country that has a sharp division between the secular left and the rather religious or Catholic right. Dom Mintoff, as his name indicates, had mixed blood. He was the product, I believe, of a Maltese and a Bulgarian or something like that. He was a dominant figure who gave something to this small, quiet island, but who took advantage of circumstances primarily to get what he wanted vis-à-vis the British and then to create sufficient problems for the CSCE so that we would remain aware of his point of view¹⁵.

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¹⁵ See the interview with Ambassador Evarist Saliba in Chapter VII.

I believe the Maltese continued in their demands and requirements at the Madrid Follow-up Meeting, is that so?

Yes, in Madrid the Maltese started a similar squabble all over again. They wanted to put some restrictions on the fleets in the Mediterranean this time, especially the American Sixth Fleet¹⁶. I'll approach this event via something completely different, but in a way that demonstrates that many people were not aware of who the Americans were and what their fleet was and what purpose it served. For the Americans, the Sixth Fleet was a fleet that had a double mandate. It was there in the framework of NATO, but it was also there to protect Israel. It's clear that it could never be under the command of anyone other than the Americans! This was obvious. But Mintoff didn't want to accept that. The Russians were playing an easy game overlooking them, but in the end, we explained to the Maltese that we were going to take a decision unanimously among the 34 delegations, and that they were risking being excluded from the process. We had unfortunately come to that point! So when they saw that, they understood that they had to back down.

It was called the “Maltese psychodrama”, if I'm not mistaken.

Yes, but you may also remember that Mintoff had made approaches towards Libya, and at one point, we really thought that they might be annexed by Libya. That *was* a psychodrama! He simply repeated the Geneva coup in Madrid. But as I already said, this wasn't relevant to the American fleet in the Mediterranean. In this matter, the Russians adopted the same approach, so in the end the Maltese had to pipe down.

Did they not find any support from other Mediterranean countries such as Yugoslavia?

Mintoff was alone against everybody else. He even went against his own ambassadors, who were very annoyed by this whole affair and who were trying to save what they could. I have to say that, at the level of their delegation, the Maltese were completely honest among the non-aligned countries. They didn't ask us to press the Mediterranean issues in an exaggerated way because they were aware that that wasn't possible. It was Ambassadors Saliba and Gauci who had it hard in Dipoli, Helsinki and up until the end of Madrid. I must say that the Cypriots were sometimes even more difficult.

Why was that?

Well, it was obviously because of their relation with Turkey. Towards the end of the consultations in Dipoli, a Minister of Foreign Affairs and representative (later revealed to be a member of the Cypriot Communist Party) who didn't much like the idea of playing intermediary between the East and the West and leaning too much to the

¹⁶ The Sixth Fleet is an operational fleet of the United States Naval Forces in Europe. It has its headquarters in Naples, Italy, and was established in 1950. It has been continually engaged since then in the Mediterranean, for example, in the US intervention in Lebanon in 1958, the confrontations

during the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the clearance of the Suez Canal after 1973, numerous NATO maritime exercises and several manoeuvres in Libyan waters during the 1980s. It also maintained its forces in the Adriatic during the war in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

By the way, how did the decision to hold the Conference in three stages staggered between Helsinki and Geneva come about?

There were two groups of countries that were against Geneva: the Soviet Union and its allies, because Helsinki was closer to Moscow; and Spain, which was still under Franco, and the Spanish delegation had been attacked at their consulate in Geneva by anti-Franco demonstrators, so they too favoured Helsinki. The majority of the Western countries favoured Geneva, but there were a few of them who would have agreed to stick with Helsinki.

Then, all of a sudden, the transportation unions in Finland went on strike and everything was blocked. We could no longer return home. So the argument went: "You see, it's not complicated in Geneva; at least we can jump into a car and drive home." Certain Westerners said: "The fact that there was a strike here demonstrates that Finland is a free country!" Most Westerners' ulterior motive for favouring Geneva was that they believed that the Finnish were influenced too much by the Soviets. This was not true, in my opinion; I think it was more a case of the Finns thinking: "Nobody will come to our aid if something happens to us. So it's necessary to make some gestures of goodwill towards the Soviet Union so that they will leave us be on the essentials."

They were realists, in other words, and as time proved, their approach was successful. There was quite an amusing debate between, on the one hand, the Soviets and the Spanish, who were pleading for Helsinki, and on the other hand, Romanian Ambassador Valentin Lipatti, pleading for Geneva. The Soviets' argument was that Finland was a very calm big country, a neutral country that had offered us quality services, delivered with a great deal of intelligence. Lipatti's response to that was: "Geneva presents pretty much the same advantages. Switzerland is also a neutral country, and if you flatten its mountains and spread them out, then it's just as big as Finland."

We ended up by entrusting the responsibility for finding a compromise to a colleague from Ireland, who went to work on the Soviets with great determination. Eventually, one day my Soviet friend Lev Mendelevich gave me a wink and said to me: "Listen carefully to the speech I'm about to give." In the speech, he said: "Well, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin lived for some years in Switzerland, including Geneva, of which he had very good memories. It's a wonderful city." So that's how Geneva was chosen. What's more, everyone was happy in the end.

On the other hand, I did not find that the political sophistication of some of our Western partners was anything out of the ordinary. Not all of them believed in the whole thing at first. The French were rather sceptical. The Belgians had their doubts. One country that was very good was Norway. The Norwegians were with us. Among those who also believed in it were our Italian friends and our friends in the neutral and non-aligned countries, the Yugoslavs, among others. The Germans believed in it insofar as it could settle their problems and on the Eastern side, we had "virtual allies" like the Polish and the Hungarians, who couldn't explicitly confirm their backing for us, but they believed in the process, thinking it would give them a little more room to roam [within their bloc].


numerous quotes from his country's leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, to be sure of staying inside.

How would you explain the low profile that the Americans adopted at the start of the whole CSCE process?

The United States was a notable absentee at Dipoli – not physically but intellectually. They had no interest in the conference. They were represented by Ambassador John Krehbiel²³, who was of Swiss origin. He was an insurance agent from Kansas who had no idea what was going on around him. Behind him sat his colleague, George Vest²⁴, who had instructions to say nothing and let the Europeans sort themselves out. This the Americans did until the election of Jimmy Carter as President. It was Jimmy Carter who invented the politics of human rights and who suddenly discovered that the United States had a tool at its disposal. We can trace the origin of the American interest in the conference to the establishment of a commission, on which the House of Representatives and the Senate had equal representation that was charged with following CSCE developments²⁵.

You mustn't forget that, at the start of the CSCE, the political “handyman” for international politics was Henry Kissinger, and he didn't believe in multilateral diplomacy. He would say: “These are all just a bunch of far-fetched stories.” I had the impression that, as long as Kissinger was there, the CSCE wouldn't be a priority in US foreign policy. His attitude was something to the effect that, if the Europeans wanted to “amuse themselves” at a conference in Helsinki or Geneva, then why not? But it would be without active participation by the US.

In fact, the human rights dimension took on importance for the Americans when American politics began to exploit human rights as part of its political toolbox. However, this wouldn't have happened without Carter. Before this, American-Soviet relations, or the thaw in tensions, had been defined by both sides in terms of progress in the area of disarmament or arms control. That was a technical operation for both sides but not a political one. And then maybe you'll remember an episode, which people completely forgot about afterwards, and it's that the Americans had linked the progress achieved at the CSCE with the progress at the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks, which were negotiations to which they had not contributed anything anyhow and which turned out to be an even a bigger disappointment.


²³ Victor John Krehbiel (1905–1997) was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Finland from 1973 to 1975.

²⁴ George Southall Vest was a United States Department of State official who had earned his military grade of Colonel of the United States Army during WWII. In 1967 he was posted to Brussels as Deputy Chief of Missions of the US Representation to the European Commission, a post he held

until 1969. That year he was moved to the post of Deputy Chief of the US Missions to NATO and stayed in Brussels until 1972. He attended the Dipoli Consultations and the first stage of the CSCE in Helsinki as US Representative for European Affairs.

²⁵ Also see the interview with Spencer Oliver in Chapter IX, where he speaks of the creation of the US CSCE Commission.

So the different stumbling blocks at Dipoli were defining the inviolability of borders, the Mediterranean and assuring a follow-up to the Conference?

Well, there were several stumbling blocks. Yes, it was primarily necessary to find a definition of the inviolability of borders that was acceptable to everyone. That was the main reason why the Soviets had come to the Conference in the first place. They were willing to pay a certain price to obtain this. When we discovered this, we the neutral countries, knew that this price would have to be found in the third basket. But we still had to convince the West – I'm leaving out the Americans, who once again weren't saying anything at Dipoli – that it was all worth it and that this price was worth what we had to give on inviolability.

I advocated in favour of inviolability and I explained that the Soviets had it already and that in fact we wouldn't be giving them anything extra. However, if we put into the text certain norms of behaviour in the domain of human rights and freedom of information, this would be completely different and completely new. This would be what I would call "planting a seed in their minds", but it was necessary to convince them first! There was a delegation that understood all of this very well, that of Italy; Ambassadors Ferrari, and in the second stage Alessi²⁶, were the main negotiators and knew how to present the legal and multilateral aspect of this idea.

The stumbling block was naturally the definition of the inviolability of borders. So that's very clear: It wasn't about the intangibility of borders, but about the use of force to alter borders. Borders can only be changed, whether according to circumstances or by the will of the participants, with common agreement.

That is to say, the Soviets wanted immutability not inviolability of frontiers?

Yes, they indeed didn't get what they wanted, which was a different understanding and definition of inviolability; they well knew that they couldn't get immutability. Moreover, it wasn't reasonable to want such a thing! After 1989, there was the reunification of Germany and it brought a significant change of borders. With the collapse of the USSR, there were also major changes in borders. There was the collapse of Yugoslavia, and again you have a change of borders.

I'm not sure that this principle has to be extended to the borders of the States born of the dissolution of the USSR, because really the borders were administrative borders that could change according to circumstances, which were maintained as they were, but with *de facto* violations. Take Abkhazia, Georgia. It was self-governed for dozens of years. Take the Transdniestrian region in relation to Moldova. Take Chechnya or even Kosovo. So, this certainly was not an easy matter to untangle, and there were some exceptions.

²⁶ See the interview with Ambassador Mario Michele Alessi in Chapter VI.

Was the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples then also a problem?

Self-determination was definitely a thorny question. But we knew from the start that, between territorial integrity and self-determination, there was a kind of insurmountable obstacle that also existed in the documents of the United Nations.

Yes, but the fact that the USSR accepted that the application of the principle of self-determination in Europe was loaded with consequences.

I would add to this that they accepted it while clinging to the idea that, in getting inviolability, they were getting something huge, even though they didn't get anything more than they already had. We had often told them that the borders on the map of their own country had been drawn by themselves, or one could say by Stalin in his time.

This is what you jokingly called their “notary-like character”?

Yes, their notary-like character. Everyone had their own little problems. The Czechs wanted to be assured that there wouldn't be any demands in regard to the Sudeten Germans. The only ones who were not very keen on all this were the Hungarians, because they were the losers in everything.

What was it that made the idea of a follow-up meeting so important for Switzerland?

The idea behind the *Final Act* was to have a final document that wouldn't be a judicial type of document, but which (by the very nature of the signatories – the highest-level representatives of all of the countries), would nevertheless have an important political impact – maybe the most important since the end of World War II. And that's what we got. This wasn't a substitute for a peace treaty – that was evident; but it was a document that was designed to establish rules of behaviour for each of the signatory countries in a whole series of areas. And this behaviour was not only politically obligatory since the document was signed by Leonid Brezhnev and America's President Ford, it was also verifiable by all the other signatories. And therein lay its importance. It was a commitment made both to one's own people and to all the others. And those others had a kind of “right of oversight” over the way in which these commitments would be applied.

In our delegation, we had ideas that went beyond our country's national interest; one had to see the CSCE process within a wider context. We were not a member of the United Nations, so for us, an arena like this one was very important. Thus, we liked the idea of meeting again within this forum.

And it was one of the rare structures in the world where there wasn't an automatic majority of communist and non-aligned countries that voted for anti-Western resolutions. It was quite the opposite. But in any case, voting counted for nothing, because everything was based on unanimous agreement. In the end, the rule of consensus led to compromises that were favourable to those in the majority. So for us

it was interesting to have a follow-up meeting to check the results. Being a practical country, we didn't want to simply have these oral or written commitments; we also wanted to implement them.

As for the Belgians, they were totally against any prospect of a follow-up. It was necessary to push them around in the end. The French were divided because they had a Minister of Foreign Affairs who had some funny ideas, and the British were very favourable towards everything concerning human rights; they were ready to follow, but not to push. So we needed a kind of driving force. This driving force was finally revealed to be one or two Western countries, in the absence of the Americans, and above all the neutral countries, who were interested in the Follow-up Meeting itself, for the verification of what we were going to establish.

After the *Helsinki Final Act* was signed, did the results reached by the Follow-up Meetings meet your expectations?

At the two Follow-up Meetings in Belgrade and in Madrid, we suffered from numerous difficulties. Just keeping the process alive was an achievement, above all in Madrid, but also in Belgrade. It was all too evident that certain Western leaders didn't have an intimate understanding of the process of the CSCE and they thought that one way to punish the Soviets was to try to stop the process. This was mostly nonsense, because the process wasn't particularly favourable to the Soviets, so they wouldn't have felt that much punished if the process had been grounded! Moreover, this didn't coincide at all with Western interests.

A particular set of difficulties were born in Belgrade, because the concrete results of this Meeting were not very brilliant. The essential thing in Belgrade was for the process to survive, to fix dates for certain expert meetings and also to set the date of the next Follow-up Meeting so as to continue the process in Madrid. In Madrid, we had three serious problems to overcome: the first was the invasion of Afghanistan²⁷; the second was the Polish crisis²⁸; and the third was the affair with the South Korean aeroplane²⁹. These were three difficult chasms to bridge.

In Switzerland, people could be found, even in the National Council [the lower house of the Federal Assembly of Switzerland], who said: "That's it! We shouldn't participate in this process any more", after the invasion of Afghanistan. At the request of my boss, Pierre Aubert³⁰, I had to convince these people in the National Council

²⁷ The deployment of the Soviet 40th Army to Afghanistan began on 24 December 1979 under Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. The Red Army troop withdrawal started on 15 May 1988, and ended on 15 February 1989 under the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev.

²⁸ General Jaruzelski had ordered the Polish General Staff to update plans for martial law on a nationwide scale in October 1980. In December 1981, the Government of the People's Republic of Poland declared martial law in an attempt to crush political opposition. This imposition lasted until 22 July 1983.

²⁹ On 1 September 1983, a Soviet jet fighter intercepted a Korean Airlines passenger flight that had strayed into Soviet airspace and shot the plane down, killing 269 passengers and crew members. The incident dramatically increased tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States.

³⁰ Pierre Aubert was head of the Federal Assembly's Political Department at the time. Later it was renamed the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs.

that we needed to follow through with this process, as it was one of the rare platforms at which we were present. The Polish crisis caused other types of problems, because the Westerners wanted to seize this opportunity to denounce what was going on, but the Soviets and their Eastern friends managed to prevent the Westerners from speaking. That was another obstacle to overcome.

We took a few months' break, but we returned to work. And then, towards the end of the gathering, at a point when we thought we had brought everything together and we had a document that was more or less valid, came the South Korean Boeing incident. There was a lot of agitation, even in Switzerland, where we participated in a way in the sanctions against the USSR. This was something quite rare in our diplomatic history, as we banned Aeroflot planes from our territory for a few days so as to block the formation of a "bypass" through Austrian and Swiss airspace, given that all other airspace was closed to them already.

When the Meeting was to resume in Madrid in 1982, after the events in Poland had taken place, there was a drama with all the foreign ministers who came and who couldn't speak because Poland was presiding and wouldn't give them the floor! The French Foreign Minister, Claude Cheysson³¹, left without having spoken. Mitterrand actually joked: "Me, I congratulate the representative of Poland, who prevented Cheysson from talking. He's pretty much the only one who has ever succeeded in stopping him from talking!"

And yet the final document that came out of Madrid was excellent, because we prepared it thoroughly. In the area of confidence- and security-building measures, we adopted a lot of new ideas. Madrid paved the way for Vienna, which was the next step. The CSCE withstood the Polish crisis, the crisis of the South Korean airplane and the SS-20 missile crisis³² that had taken place previously, and the boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games.³³ So we saw that, for different reasons, everybody wanted to maintain this arena. The Americans and Kampelman³⁴ were very skilled at always keeping the Westerners in their camp. He was very pugnacious.

There is one question that always troubles me: Why did the Soviets stay in the process, when it had become such "a permanent headache"?

I once visited Mendelevich in Copenhagen after he had been appointed Soviet Ambassador to Denmark³⁵ and I asked him the same question. This is what he told me: "You know, once the Central Committee determined a particular course of action, it became very difficult to change it. It was practically impossible to do otherwise."

³¹ Claude Cheysson (1920–2012): Foreign Minister in the Government of Pierre Mauroy from 1981 to 1984.

³² The Soviet SS-20 was an intermediate-range, road-mobile, solid-propellant ballistic missile. Its range was insufficient to threaten the US directly, but all the strategic targets in Europe could be reached.

³³ The boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics was a part of a package of actions initiated by the United States to protest against the Soviet war in Afghanistan.

³⁴ Max Kampelman (1920–2013) was a lawyer, politician and negotiator in Washington D.C. in the early 70s. He was appointed head of the US delegation to the CSCE Madrid Follow-up Meeting and was known to be a fierce defender of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Also see interview with Spencer Oliver in Chapter IX.

³⁵ Lev Isaacovich Mendelevich was appointed Ambassador of USSR to Denmark from 1984 to 1986.

But I have another explanation, for what it's worth. One of the Soviet delegates for a long time was Sergey Kondrashov³⁶, a general in the KGB, who later wrote his memoirs. So anyhow, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Dipoli in 1995, a number of my eminent colleagues from Geneva and Helsinki were invited by the Finns to come to Helsinki as "the surviving veterans", so of course Kondrashov was there, and the reunion was hosted by the President of Finland at the time, Martti Ahtisaari.

During the ceremonial dinner, I suggested that each of us tell a story about Dipoli or Geneva that the others didn't know about. Kondrashov told us something very interesting. He said that, in 1974, Yury Andropov, who had then been head of the KGB since 1967 and would later on become the General Secretary of the Communist Party [in 1982], had told him that the intelligence he had from his representative in Geneva (i.e., a KGB man in the delegation) was that the Soviet delegation was in the process of committing a crime of high treason. They were apparently giving in on everything. So Andropov told him: "I confer on you, comrade Kondrashov, the duty to go now as my delegate and conduct an investigation. Then you will come back and tell me whether it's true or not, what the problem is, and what should be done."

Kondrashov came to Geneva and he spoke with a lot of people – Westerners and Soviets. He returned and said to Andropov: "We want the inviolability of borders, but we have to pay a price for that, or we'll bring everything to a halt. This price is connected to the liberalization of our system."

I believe Andropov would doubtless have responded to him: "But this is not high treason. It's completely in our interests, because we can no longer govern the way Stalin governed. We have to start adapting slowly. It's much easier to adapt slowly if we sign at the highest level a document that demands these adaptations rather than reforming from the base, which in our country is very conservative. Then we can always assert that we obtained something in exchange." So there were both: the rigidity, but also the thinking of some in Moscow who wanted to move towards a controlled liberalization.

But the Soviets started to introduce a certain number of modifications to their ways quite early, due to the provisions contained in the *Helsinki Final Act*, did they not?

Oh yes, Russia and the newly independent republics changed their constitutions after 1990. They did a lot of things before that too. But they [the Soviets] also told me at the time: "For us, these are revolutions that you are asking us to make. Go slowly, don't ask us to do too much, too fast."

In terms of freedom of information, we required the sale of Western newspapers in the USSR. We demanded more freedom for foreign correspondents. We demanded

³⁶ Sergey Aleksandrovich Kondrashov (1923–2007) was subsequently appointed as of 1968 deputy chief of foreign intelligence services and then senior consultant to Yury Vladimirovich Andropov, KGB Chairman and future General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1982–1984).

In the end, all this resonated, because, in a climate of easing tensions, the USSR and its allies couldn't appear to be spoilsports or hard-line dictatorships. They had to play an open game, and we could count on this and use it to our advantage. So each Follow-up Meeting, first in Belgrade and then in Madrid, added something to the *Final Act* – additional documents, proposals for expert meetings and the like. While we could not move forward and sometimes we even stagnated, we never moved backwards.

Yes, the CSCE did allow for the solution of a large number of humanitarian problems, did it not?

Specifically, it allowed for this through the pressure it exerted and also through the fact that it created a general climate in which it was difficult to remain blind to humanitarian issues and calls for assistance. For example, I remember that, one day, when I was Secretary of State, a member of the Swiss parliament named Hans Steffen came to see me in Bern. He said to me: "I saw in the Amnesty International newsletter that a pastor with the same first and last name as me and who is the pastor of a German-speaking community somewhere in the USSR was recently arrested for wanting to emigrate. Is it possible to intervene on his behalf, even though he isn't Swiss? I told him: "We'll see what we can do." I asked our Ambassador in Moscow to intervene, which he did. Three weeks later, our Ambassador was summoned and told: "Here is your Mr. Steffen; take him – he's yours." We flew him to Switzerland, where his namesake took care of him and transferred him to his native Germany.

After the end of the Cold War in 1990, I had been posted as Ambassador to Washington and there I met a colleague who was stationed in Prague. He told me he was friends with Jiří Dienstbier, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time and a communist-era dissident. Apparently he had told him that, among the files he had inherited as Foreign Minister, he had found some documents on the CSCE and that, in these files, Switzerland was often mentioned as a country – and I as a person – that took vigorous positions in the area of civil liberties in Western Europe. My colleague told me that Dienstbier wanted to meet me one day and thank me for what we had done indirectly for people like himself and the then President elect of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel. Sometime later, when I went on vacation to Prague, we met and he said to me: "You know, these files revealed a lot to us – among other things, that there were countries on the Western side that were strongly engaged on behalf of the dissidents. You were one of them. There was one Western country that never spoke up for us, and that was Belgium."

So is this to say that there was a wave of scepticism among the Western countries?

There was scepticism. That's the way the Western world was at the time. I say that with full knowledge of the facts. A certain number of people at the political level were professional anti-communists, but it was a simplistic kind of anti-communism – completely simplistic. For example, in Vienna, one of the ideas was to have a meeting on human rights. The Soviets proposed holding it in Moscow. There was an outcry from certain Westerners who said: "What? You're going to have a conference on human rights in the country that violates them the most?" But that's exactly where it needed to be held. A conference on human rights that took place in Bonn or Brussels would have been pointless, but in Moscow it would be meaningful.

the ambassador to Moscow, who was very stand-up, very logical. On the side of the UK, there was an excellent negotiator who was the son of a grand chess master called Alexander. I chaired the committee of the third basket that was focused on the human contacts and information and my Austrian colleague, Franz Ceska, was focused on freedom of movement. These were the two most difficult points. Fortunately, we also had an excellent representative from Canada, Ambassador Shenstone⁴⁰, who helped us a lot, who was very open and who also knew how to write well. It was necessary to know how to write. Every word needed to carry weight. Everything was done in English eventually. In the economic sphere, there was no problem. Everyone agreed on everything very quickly. They could have wrapped everything up in three months.

There are historians and political scientists who claim that the CSCE helped to bring about the end of communism. What is your outlook on this and are there connections between the demise of this political system and the CSCE process?

In my opinion, the CSCE had both direct and indirect effects on what happened at the end of the 1980s. It's clear that the appearance of the Helsinki Committees and Assemblies with their famous dissidents, such as Andrei Sakharov, started to weigh on internal Soviet politics. Secondly, Gorbachev wanted to change and to establish a new kind of relationship with Europe and the United States. Was he forced to do it or did he want to do it deep down? We'll never know.

The three important powers that governed the USSR were the Communist Party, the army, and the KGB with all its related operations. The army and the Party were headed by very conservative people who didn't know much about the outside world, who wanted to protect their positions and who above all didn't want to move. The motor of change was the KGB! The KGB was the institution in the Soviet Union that knew the outside world the best and so could make comparisons. The people who worked for the KGB could travel, read, get up to speed on what was going on elsewhere and become aware that their country was lagging way behind. And I believe it's here that one could find the people who were the motor of change.

We sometimes asked ourselves why the USSR didn't interrupt the process. Well, as I told you before, I believe that there were people who deep down thought that it wasn't a bad thing to put themselves under a bit of pressure to make reforms. It's easier to make them if one has an international vision and if one has international commitments.

We have seen many changes and geopolitical fusions as well as divisions since the 1990s. In the light of these changes, do you think that the OSCE has a function, a future?

My sentiment was that the CSCE exceeded its ambitions. Let us look a little closer at what happened in 1989 and 1990. I'll enumerate these events out of chronological



⁴⁰ Ambassador Michael Shenstone served in a variety of senior diplomatic posts, including as Canada's ambassador to Saudi Arabia; to Austria; Canada's representative to NATO

– Warsaw Pact disarmament negotiations, He also served as director-general of African and Middle Eastern Affairs at the Canadian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

order: We had the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact; the retreat of Soviet troops from Central Europe as well as from Berlin and from Germany; The loosening of the grip of the Eastern European regimes, starting with that of East Germany; Hungary's setting the pace by opening its border with Austria to East German tourists. All of this was perhaps foreseeable. The introduction of a multiparty system in the USSR – that was unforeseeable. It went beyond anything we could have imagined.

My opinion was that, in the space of around 17 years, the CSCE had fulfilled its mission as such and that it couldn't go any further. Maintaining and transforming this process would involve adding a more European component, something that maybe wasn't really useful or necessary. In any case, the European stage is full of organizations that do more or less the same thing. There is the European Union for Western Europe. There is the Council of Europe, which very quickly expanded towards the Eastern countries. There is NATO, for that matter [after its enlargement in 2004 to encompass seven East European countries]. And that's not counting all the NGOs operating in the region. During the Russian presidential elections, I saw at least five or six European organizations observing!

So what is the role of the OSCE in all of this? Essentially, the only difference between the OSCE and the European Union or NATO or the Council of Europe is that, within the OSCE, there are the former Soviet Central Asian countries. Is that in itself enough of an interest to allow the OSCE to go on living? Every international organization has its proponents, who will defend it. When the CSCE was born, it had to confront those with vested interests in the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Economic Community. But to make the CSCE disappear or wind it up at some point after Vienna would have been difficult.

The question I would like to ask is: What should the role of the OSCE be today? Monitoring elections and human rights? Well, the context is very different in each country now. When the OSCE tried to play a role in Kosovo in 1998-1999 by sending in human rights monitors, it was accused of paving the way for the NATO bombing campaign. I must say that some of these notions are quite muddled. This is the reason I'd say that the CSCE had done and given all it could in the service of East-West relations and the liberalization of the whole of Europe, and that what came next was an artificial way of keeping alive an organization that was not indispensable in my view.

But let us not deny the CSCE's great achievements. The CSCE brought three things: A code of conduct for managing East-West relations, a programme to guide work, and a system of human rights and confidence-building measures. It was something very inventive and original. During this period, we had people who denigrated it or who didn't believe in it, but there were two or three protectors of the process who believed in it from the start and who maintained it. This established a new type of relations between States. What happened after the signing of the *Final Act* is that, from that point on, it became legitimate for a State to protest the behaviour of another State towards its own citizens. This was very new.

Despite all our assumptions, speculations and hypotheses, it seems as if there was still something missing – a shroud of mystery lingering. Maybe you have a last thought to share or a message to transmit for posterity?

I definitely think it would be useful to clarify some of the mysteries of our recent history that have remained undisturbed to this day. There are still living witnesses; so I would think that if a former Soviet delegate and a representative of a former satellite country as well as an American and a European, including a Swiss, would be invited to discuss what made it possible to keep alive a process that had degenerated along the way, we would be very surprised at the answers we might get. Those who launched the process in the USSR are no longer among us: Gromyko, his deputy Kovalev, Zorin and Mendelevich. All of them have passed away. This whole generation has almost disappeared. So time is getting shorter for revealing what remained unexplained.



The interview with Ambassador Brunner was conducted in French by Professor Victor-Yves Ghebali over three recording sessions held on 5, 8 and 13 August 2002. These sessions took place at the Graduate Institute for International Studies in Geneva.

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27. Centre International de Conférence de Genève (CICG), the venue of the second stage of the CSCE between 1973 and 1975.

Edouard Brunner

Edouard Brunner was born in 1932 in Istanbul into a diplomatic family. He studied law at the University of Geneva before joining the Swiss Foreign Ministry in 1956.

Ambassador Brunner worked in various Swiss embassies around the world before being named deputy head of the Swiss delegation to the CSCE preparatory talks in 1972. He then took part (as delegation adviser) in all three stages of the negotiations leading to the signing of the *Final Act*.

In 1978, Ambassador Brunner left the CSCE process and continued his work at the Foreign Ministry, where he headed the political department responsible for relations with Europe and North America. From 1984, he served for five years as Secretary of State (the second highest post in the Ministry). He was subsequently appointed Ambassador to the United



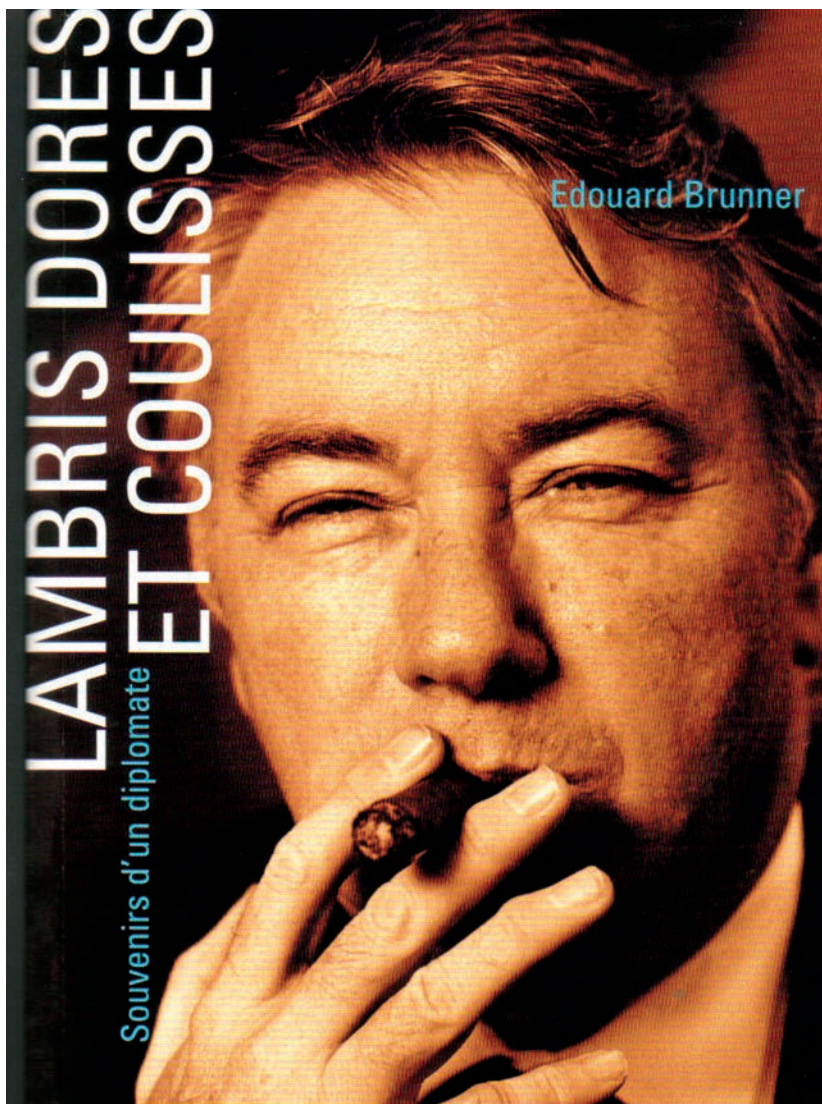
States in Washington (1989–1993) and then, until his retirement, served as Ambassador to France in Paris (1993–1997).

Ambassador Brunner's conflict resolution skills were widely valued. In 1984, he was involved in secret talks held in Switzerland aimed at restoring ties between the United Kingdom and Argentina following the 1982 Falklands War, and he twice served as a special UN envoy – to the Middle East in 1991 and 1993, and to Georgia between 1993 and 1994 to secure a truce in the war in Abkhazia. He was a diplomat for UNESCO from 1995 until his retirement in March 1997.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Edouard Brunner became a prominent proponent of cooperation between international organizations such as NATO, the Council of Europe, the

European Union and the OSCE. He was an instrumental figure in the founding of the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces in 2000 and was appointed as its first President. He recounted his diplomatic experiences in a memoir entitled *Lambris dorés et coulisses: souvenirs d'un diplomate [Gilded pannelings and the backstage: memories of a diplomat]* (Georg Publisher, Geneva 2001).

Ambassador Brunner passed away in Switzerland in 2007. An anthology of essays by colleagues and admirers celebrating his lifelong contribution to the art of diplomacy, *Edouard Brunner ou la diplomatie du possible*, was published as an occasional paper in 2008 by the Center for Security Studies in Zürich: *Zürcher Beiträge zur Sicherheitspolitik* Nr. 82.



28. Edouard Brunner's memoirs book cover, released in 2002 by Georg Publishers, Geneva, Switzerland.



29. Ambassador Rudolf Bindschedler was head of the Swiss delegation to Dipoli and during stage II in Geneva. As an eminent expert in public international law, neutrality and the security policy of Switzerland, he was also a fervent advocate of the principle on peaceful settlement of international disputes.



30. Pierre Graber signed the Helsinki Final Act on behalf of Switzerland as President of the Swiss Confederation, a responsibility he held from 1975 until early 1978.



31. Former secretary of the Swiss delegation in Dipoli and in Geneva, ambassador Hans Jörg Renk (left) exchanging views with the former head of the Swiss delegation to the OSCE in Vienna (1997–2001), ambassador Marianne von Grünigen (right) about the contributions Switzerland brought to the Helsinki process; Aargau. (10 November 2009)



32. Ambassador Petr Steglich and Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme.



Ambassador Peter Steglich of the German Democratic Republic

I first came into contact with the CSCE in 1973. I had been Counsellor for three years at our Finnish embassy and Ambassador for three years in Sweden. After this appointment, I came to Berlin and became head of the Department for Northern European Countries in the Foreign Ministry.

In the summer of 1975, when the delegation of the GDR was being assembled for the third stage of the Helsinki process – the signing of the *Final Act* – I was appointed the delegation's Secretary because I spoke Finnish and had gained a good deal of experience with the diplomatic corps in Helsinki. So this was my entrance into this most interesting game of European security. From then on, the CSCE actually became the drug of my diplomatic life. Once one has tried it, one can never set oneself free from the craving for more. Right up to the end of the GDR – that is until 1990 – my professional life was entirely devoted to the CSCE.

After the Helsinki Summit in 1975, I remained head of the Department for Northern European Countries in Berlin (still within the Foreign Ministry) until 1976. Then I was moved to the department whose responsibilities included the CSCE. The department was directly accountable to our Foreign Minister and dealt largely, but not

of States. The negotiations turned out to be difficult and fruitless, but after 1975, the GDR was embraced as a fully-fledged partner in international policy circles. And this was seen as Honecker's personal triumph. Now he could travel to the Western countries and speak to his counterparts, whereas before, it had been impossible – it just was not on. Now, suddenly, in Helsinki, he had the opportunity to meet so many world leaders: President Gerald Ford of the United States, the Finnish President Urho Kekkonen, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt⁴ of the Federal Republic of Germany, and all the others present at the event.

And of course, this was a big event, years after all the bad blood between the GDR and the FRG; Erich Honecker sat across the aisle from Helmut Schmidt and met him face-to-face for the first time at the Helsinki Summit. In the main lobby, one would hear pleasantries exchanged, and when people would ask how our mutual understanding was coming along, representatives from both camps answered: “Yes, we are indeed headed in the right direction and our relations are coming along quite well ...” It was a gigantic theatre in which everybody had a role to play.

I remember that the Romanian delegation hovered around their head of State, Nicolae Ceaușescu, who always remained isolated. He stood there alone, proud and impassive, like an emperor, surrounded by his entourage. But apart from that, there was a lot of interaction between delegations. There was above all a sense of political goodwill motivated by a common desire between East and West to reach an understanding of each others' interests.

Each of the participating States saw the advantages they could gain by reaching an agreement on a strategic balance between the “Great Powers”. Both sides had their own interests and reasons. The East wanted to scale down its own arms, because the cost of its weaponry was too great, and the West wanted disarmament of the conventional forces in the East, because they feared its huge war machine. The Eastern countries called for nuclear disarmament in the West, fearing that nuclear war could hit Europe, the Americans' nuclear arsenal being their top concern. So the Western countries were clearly superior in terms of nuclear weapons, whereas the Eastern countries were likely to be superior in terms of conventional arms on the European continent.

But setting aside the politico-military issues, were there not also some legitimate concerns regarding discrepancies in the interpretation of certain human rights and fundamental freedoms?

As mentioned earlier, at that time there was an atmosphere of goodwill, of amenability. Everybody wanted to agree with everybody else. It was, for example, the wish of many citizens of the GDR to leave the country. So what happened? A gentleman from Northern Europe or Southern Europe or wherever would approach Honecker and hand him a list with names of people who had been separated from their families by the Berlin Wall and say: “Here are people who want to get married, or who want

⁴ Helmut Schmidt served as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany from 1974 to 1982.

a family reunion – can't this be arranged?" And Honecker would more often than not reply: "Yes, yes; it can be arranged – these are issues of human contact." Then it would be left to me to arrange such encounters, reunions and gatherings. I can tell you that of the many such requests handed over, more than 90 per cent were approved.

Did the Berlin Wall overshadow the CSCE process between 1972 and 1975?

The problem was not that the Berlin Wall had been erected. Even President Kennedy had accepted the fact of its existence⁵. Kennedy had only one condition: The connecting routes [between West Berlin and Western Europe] must remain free. And everyone respected that. It applied to transport by air, land and waterway. West Berlin was always accessible to every Western State. The GDR meticulously ensured that transports were not hindered. Every day, military transports from the West rolled along the highways of the GDR.

That is to say, the Wall was a problem for the people of the GDR, because they could not move freely anymore. For many, the Berlin Wall was a political and human disaster. But geopolitically, it was not that much of a problem. The real calamity was the tanks with live ammunition that were stationed in West Berlin and in the woods around Berlin, ready to shoot at any time if ordered to do so. Weeks after the Berlin Wall was built, Soviet and American tanks rolled towards Checkpoint Charlie with live ammunition in their barrels. This threat was averted thanks to a few clever people who said: "Stop and assess the situation first!" Because in a situation like that, something could have happened that nobody wanted, throwing the two peoples and two countries into war.

So would you say that, in those years, the concept of national security in the GDR came before the concept of humanity – or the "human dimension", as the OSCE calls it today?

Certainly. Look, a few years ago, Egon Bahr,⁶ a West German politician and close friend of Willy Brandt, said that, to his way of thinking, human rights meant first and foremost a roof over one's head, food to eat, access to education and the inner assurance that your life was safe. These were human rights for him, he declared: "Everything else comes afterwards."

For me, the Helsinki Decalogue laid out the bottom line right from the beginning: Only when there is peace between nations can other matters be negotiated. It's true that the so-called "human dimension" – or the third basket and everything that goes with it – played a major role in the overall package of the Conference. Nevertheless, it was called the "Conference on Security – *Security* – and Cooperation in Europe". It was not called the "Conference on the Human Dimension". That came later⁷, just

⁵ During the Vienna [USA-USSR] Summit Meeting held in June 1961, US President John F. Kennedy essentially conveyed to Nikita Khrushchev the tacit agreement of the United States to the permanent division of Berlin (as a safeguard of the agreements reached until then).

⁶ Egon Bahr served as the German Federal Minister for Special Affairs between 1972 and 1974 and then as Minister for Economic Cooperation (1974–1976). Between 1969 and

1972, he was Secretary to the Prime Minister Willy Brandt. He is also known as the creator of the *Ostpolitik* concept Brandt later promoted.

⁷ The Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting (1986–1989) includes a decision on the "Human Dimension of the CSCE", which was to be the core subject of a three-part Conference to be held in Paris (1989), Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991).

before 1990. But up until 1989, security and all the components of security, as they were defined by the Conference, were of crucial concern to all European citizens.

Actually, expressions like “democracy” and “human rights” or “fundamental freedoms” were avoided at the beginning of the process. It was only later that the language used in the third basket evolved. That happened only after 1986, during the Vienna Follow-up Meeting. There, the Western countries focused on the human dimension with particular single-mindedness. How did they do that? Well, every Western State had a very precise overview of where in the socialist States human rights were being violated. They knew exactly which countries denied which of their citizens the right to cross the national borders, which countries had such-and-such regulations, and so on. They were focused and well prepared.

Unfortunately, we East Germans were not so well prepared. Sure, we had plenty of documentation regarding where in the capitalist States the rights of the people were being violated, but these facts or data more or less amounted to an all-inclusive criticism of the capitalist system that related to matters such as unemployment and social services. I should say that most of the Western countries’ embassies had been established in Eastern Europe for decades, so they had a good overview of what was going on wherever they were. By contrast, the GDR did not have embassies everywhere; where we did have them, they had not been established for long. So our ambassadors and civil servants had other things to do than scrutinize the internal practices of a host country.

But please let me point out that, for the GDR at that time, the human dimension played only a limited role within the general context of the *Final Act*. First in order of importance for us came the principle of refraining from the use of force; the principle of the inviolability of frontiers; territorial integrity of all States; peaceful settlement of disputes; and non-interference in countries’ internal affairs. These were the concerns that the socialist camp wanted to talk about. Humanitarian affairs, as we used to call them – well, yes – they *were* important, but in those days they really were sitting in the back seat.

And it makes sense: If peace reigns, then you can speak about humanitarian concerns as much as you like; but if you have war, everything is chaos and ends in a heap of ruins. That was our basic position, for as long as both camps existed. When they no longer existed, this basic theory evolved in another direction. Today, people in Europe give little thought to the consequences of war and how precarious maintaining peace can be. However, at the time we are talking about, humanitarian questions posed a problem, but they were not *the* real problem.

From your perspective, and given the geopolitical context of the 1980s, how much influence do you think the GDR and the FRG wielded with their respective allies?

Moscow naturally dominated us, because Moscow had won the war; Moscow had “liberated” Eastern Europe. After two or three glasses of vodka, their people would sometimes tell us: “Dear comrades, just remember – without our intervention, you wouldn’t even exist.”

I would say that West Germany was more democratic than East Germany. Take, for example, the time the Madrid Follow-up Meeting was endangered by the shooting down of the South Korean airliner⁸ in 1983. When this happened, Washington said: “Enough is enough – there is nothing more to talk about.” They wanted the Conference to end. But Bonn was strong enough to demand: “No, this cannot be – we must keep talking. There must be a conclusion to these negotiations!” And why did Bonn insist like that? Because the majority of the participating States and Bonn first and foremost wanted a result that demonstrated the strength of Western Europe and above all of Bonn and Hans-Dietrich Genscher personally. In many respects, there was an easing of the relations between East and West Germany, both then and after Madrid.

So would you say that the West German leaders had a more “streetwise” approach to the situation than their East German partners?

In one sense, yes; for instance, Genscher only met his counterpart from the GDR at CSCE conferences. On no other occasions did he meet him face-to-face. This was because Bonn’s motto had been: “Two independent German States amount to a tautology; there are only two States within one nation.” And Bonn stuck to that line. But Berlin never appreciated this. Berlin thought that the German question had been settled with the signing of the *Helsinki Final Act*. This was a gigantic fallacy. The issue was not settled, because Moscow always kept the provisions Bonn had stipulated in its “Letter on German Unity”⁹ in the back of its mind.

By contrast, many of our top representatives had no idea what code of conduct they should adopt and how an international conference proceeded in general. My colleagues and I had to explain to them: “There is a different chairmanship every day, then there are requests to speak, and then this and that happens ...” Take our Foreign Minister¹⁰ – he was an old communist (he’d spent a lot of time in Moscow). One had to take him by the hand and say: “So, Mr. Foreign Minister, now you must say: ‘I thank you for your contribution.’ And now you must say: ‘Now it is the turn of the distinguished representative of so-and-so to speak.’” He did not know these basic steps or the right words. These people had no notion of what game they were playing; one had to work on them, so to speak – to show them the ropes.

But at the day-to-day level of the various meetings you attended, it was more an equal-to-equal encounter, was it not?

Undoubtedly so. Don’t forget that, in those years, the Federal Republic was a border State like the GDR – stuck between two systems. The destiny of Europe would be

⁸ On 1 September 1983, a Soviet jet fighter intercepted a Korean Airlines passenger flight that had strayed into Soviet airspace and shot the plane down, killing 269 passengers and crew members. The incident dramatically increased tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States.

⁹ In August 1970, while the Moscow Treaty was about to be signed between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union (the first agreement in a series of subsequent friendship treaties between the FRG and the USSR), the FRG presented the the Soviet Government with a “Letter on

German Unity”. In this letter, the FRG stated that its aims do not contradict the principles of the Moscow Treaty and that it intends to work towards a state of peace in Europe “in which the German people will regain their unity in free self-determination”.

¹⁰ Otto Winzer (1902–1975) returned from exile in the Soviet Union after World War II to set up the Soviet Military Administration in Germany. He served as Foreign Minister of GDR between 1965 and 1975, resigning shortly before his death. On 3 March 1975, Oskar Fisher took over this post.

decided here, and everything could go totally wrong. So both sides wanted to be reasonable; nobody wanted the Cold War to turn into a hot one. I must say this was especially true for the Federal Republic of Germany. When the West Germans looked across their borders, they saw Poland and the GDR facing them. So it was no wonder that the Federal Republic wanted to try to create a better environment for itself, which it aimed to do by creating good relations (through the Conference) with the Eastern European countries.

Between the two German delegations at the CSCE, there was always an unspoken rule: We were to refrain from doing anything that would lead to any German disputes that could in turn lead to a breakdown of any of the current or foreseen CSCE meetings. So we had to watch our tongues. Mainly, of course, because there was always this problem: Will peace prevail? The Germans of my generation wanted no more war – that was clear. This really was the bottom line for us.

This outlook changed or diversified with the following generation. Some young people began wanting to go out and discover the world, while others opposed this and insisted that peace was the most important goal. Both German States approached this question in a single-minded way. During our meetings with Honecker, we always discussed this basic question: “What can we do to ensure that peace is preserved – at least in Europe?”

So when, during the Madrid Follow-up Meeting, there was a breakdown in communications for several months between the Warsaw Pact and the NATO States, the representative from Bonn came up to me and said: “Mr. Ambassador, neither bloc is speaking to the other, but we must not follow suit. We can still meet in a restaurant and talk.” And that is just what we did, even though we knew that it would not be appreciated by our respective partners. But we did not necessarily have to tell them that we were meeting. We would simply meet up at an agreed place. So these channels were kept open, even though, as far as the media were concerned, there appeared to be a complete lack of dialogue. Of course, my counterpart would tell his people what I had said to him, and I would tell my people what he had said to me.

It wasn't just East and West Germany that bridged the gaps by holding informal bilateral meetings. The Poles did exactly the same thing with the French, and the Hungarians did the same thing with the Americans. Everybody did this. Whenever the Conference would ground to a halt, the informal channels always remained open. But the difference was that we had to be extra careful, because if someone like the Dutch or the British, who were the fiercest opponents of a unified Germany, got wind of any joint German initiative, it would have been nipped in the bud. Such initiatives had no chance of survival if it became known that both East and West Germany were involved in one way or another. So we had to be clever. For instance, after speaking to me, my counterpart from the Federal Republic would address our French colleague, simply inquiring whether something could be done about this, that or the other. There were enough possibilities to continue some kind of dialogue without having to take the floor. We just had to be clever.

I actually enjoyed this kind of bilateral work much more than multilateral work. When you are working bilaterally, you represent, express and defend the interests of

your own country, trying to make as many contacts as possible in order to better understand your counterpart and thereby “create relations” between both countries for their mutual benefit. Such an exchange is generally based more than anything on friendliness and finding a common language. Sometimes, of course, there are strained bilateral relations, but by and large for me personally, working bilaterally was enjoyable.

The multilateral sphere is much more complex and difficult to figure out. In multilateral diplomacy, you have to deal with many more people. I had to devise ways of always representing my country within the scope of the possibilities that a process like the CSCE afforded. This was troublesome for the GDR, as you can imagine. After all, we were dealing with a confrontation between capitalist and socialist systems. So I had to sit there and listen on behalf of my country to things that were not too pleasant to hear – to do with the Berlin Wall, or political prisoners, or ordinary people’s inability to travel freely, and so on. Sometimes it was not easy for me to find a way to respond to such accusations.

Speaking of the freedom to travel, were you involved in securing exit visas or special travel permissions in your capacity as Ambassador?

Yes. In Madrid, but more especially in Vienna, I would be approached by leaders of the Western delegations, who handed me lists of prospective emigrants, saying: “Mr. Ambassador, we have another list for you.” So I was left with these lists of people who allegedly wished to cross the border for whatever reasons and I would pass the list on to those in charge of considering such requests. Seldom did I get to know who subsequently got permission to leave the country, because these were very tortuous matters in which I had no say, and I had to tell that to my Western partners. I had to tell them that this was not a matter for the Foreign Ministry of the GDR to decide upon; it was primarily a matter to be dealt with by the Ministry of the Interior.

Anyway, I would send these lists on to Berlin with the remark that they had been brought to my attention and that I requested their favourable consideration. In fact, I would even exert my own small form of pressure on the authorities by adding: “If this is not approved, it could become a subject of discussion at the Conference.” I knew Berlin wanted to avoid at any price any criticism regarding a specific personal case, because the GDR wanted to be positive and act as one of the key-players in the overall system of European security, so some concessions had to be made.

When Honecker was visiting his birthplace in the Saarland region of the Federal Republic in 1986 (I was not there at the time; a colleague told me this later), he was asked: “How are things now in terms of the travel issue?” He replied: “We will probably get to the point where tourist travel [to the West] will be organized in the same way as it is to Poland or to Czechoslovakia, for instance.” At that time, travel to these countries was of course visa-free, so everyone looked at each other in disbelief – that was inconceivable at the time!

The fact that this did not actually come about earlier was a serious mistake. And we, as diplomats, pointed this out: “For heaven’s sake, let the people leave the country; allow them to go and come back.” We always said that people should be permitted to travel, for example, to the Federal Republic, and then they would see how people lived

there. They would see that all that glitters is not always gold, and that there were many, many other problems there.

But at that time, our words fell on deaf ears. That's a shame, since time has shown that we were right. After all, the system in which I live today – that of modern-day Germany – is not any easier to deal with [than was living in East Germany] when it comes to people's individual rights. Of course, you can fight for your rights today, go to court and press charges against whomever. That either was not possible in the GDR, or the possibility to do so was limited. But if you want to go to court today and want your rights to be defended, well, fine, you may do so, but you could very easily have to wait for four or five years, until a court has time to deal with your case. I think I am justified in asking: "What benefit is that to me? I don't even know whether I'll be alive four years from now, so I might as well just drop the case right off the bat!"

Looking back at the era between the mid-1970s and the end of the 1980s, how much was the CSCE process a topic of discussion among ordinary GDR citizens, do you think?

In the GDR, the "pan-European process", as it was sometimes called, was very much a topic of discussion among the population. There's no doubt about that. On the one hand, everyone was interested in the issue of freedom of travel (including the issue of exit permits), while on the other hand, the CSCE was a hot topic because the citizens of the GDR suddenly got the feeling that we were "somebody" in the international world. They felt the GDR was not being treated as a pariah, as it had been before, but as a normal participant in the European process.

Above all, there was the feeling of: "Yes, now we are recognized. Now our State is recognized – it is respected." Indeed, I gave many lectures in the GDR about the CSCE process, not only to officials, but also to athletes and cultural figures and the like. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to speak to larger groups or gatherings, but still, for the man in the street, the CSCE was definitely a topic of conversation.

This increasing civic awareness had negative, as well as positive, consequences. One effect of this awareness was that the GDR became less active in the CSCE process. The more the discussions focused on "humanitarian affairs", as they were called then, the more people in the leadership of the GDR became reluctant to deal with the subject of the CSCE in a broader sense. They continued to take part in the negotiations, but their interest in the process noticeably decreased.

Those who had posts of responsibility in the GDR at the time saw that that which was of utmost importance for them – political integrity and all that went with it – had taken a back seat at the discussions, while emphasis on the humanitarian issues was growing stronger and stronger. That in turn prompted growing unrest in the GDR. Some politically significant people in the Government and in the State leadership actually did not want to have anything to do with the Conference, because they were annoyed that people were not happy with their lives and were expressing their discontent. They felt wronged by the peoples' attitude. Their feeling was: "Not only are we always right, but we also provide everything that the people need."

Some historians advance the theory that the CSCE laid the groundwork for – and then precipitated – the demise of the communist system. Do your experiences lead you to share this view?

Many things which the West had been demanding and negotiating at the CSCE came about all at once, in a landslide. Suddenly, citizens of the GDR could travel. Exit points were created. Another visa system was set up, so practically every travel application was approved. But the fact that the [socialist] systems broke down was not a consequence of the CSCE; rather, this breakdown was caused by the Eastern bloc's own weakness. To say that the CSCE caused the demise of communism would be wrong in my view, although it *did* contribute to it.

I know that others see it differently. Some people who are even older than me say: "It was the CSCE – and making too many concessions to the West – which caused the collapse." But the fact that the focus shifted really had more to do with the whole political situation than with the structures of the CSCE. A system can only be kept in place as long as it is healthy and strong. If it becomes unhealthy, it shakes, collapses and dies. And the GDR, as a State system, died – that is a fact.

Did the idea of defecting from the GDR ever cross your mind? We came across some old press clippings that mentioned your name in relation to a certain East German who had disowned his allegiance to his country's Foreign Service.

I never thought of abandoning my country. Never! But as regards those press clippings that you found, permit me to clear up a piece of long-standing misinformation. You see, when I was working as a Counsellor at our embassy in Helsinki, I had a colleague there named Peter Schädlich – a name very similar to mine. It turned out that he had been recruited by a Western intelligence agency. He eventually returned to Berlin from Helsinki, just like me, and worked at the Foreign Ministry. But at one point he travelled with a trade delegation back to Finland, where he changed sides – that is to say, he defected.

Now, the Finns set great store by not disclosing the full names of any defectors – only their initials. So when "P.S." defected, everyone looked in their copy of *Who's Who*, or whatever, and concluded: "Ah, this P.S. can only be Peter Steglich, head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Northern European Countries." This immediately became a headline in all the newspapers in the Federal Republic: "Peter Steglich changes sides"¹¹ It was an interesting twist because, not long before that, there had been another big spy story scandal – a GDR spy working in Willy Brandt's office had been spilling secrets to Berlin.¹² And now here we had a "spy" from the other side who had been uncovered!



¹¹ This affair was also covered by several regional newspapers in Ohio and Pennsylvania, which perpetuated the confusion over the two men's names.

¹² In 1974, Willy Brandt's personal assistant, Günter Guillaume, was arrested as a spy for the East German State Security Service [Stasi]. Shortly thereafter, Brandt resigned and Helmut Schmidt became Chancellor. Speculation as to whether or not Brandt resigned because of Guillaume's arrest is still rife today.

I have since learned that this young man who betrayed his country – for me it remains a betrayal – was then sent around the world to try to enlist his former colleagues to work for Western foreign services. He even visited my aunt, who had been living in the Federal Republic since 1945 or 1946, just so he could pump her for personal details about me, which he could then use to influence me to switch sides. Because of this confusion about our names, some of my parents' friends stopped speaking to them! My mother would ask them: "What's wrong?" And they would tell her: "Well now, your boy has run away, we can't have anything to do with you anymore."

In light of the experience you gained as a loyal CSCE delegate, do you consider that the OSCE still has a role to play among all the other European intergovernmental organizations?

When Dmitry Medvedev was President of Russia, he suggested that a comprehensive new contract on European security be drawn up. Well, I have since then spoken to different people who have said: "Firstly, nobody takes Medvedev seriously; secondly, nobody is interested in such an entity anymore, because priorities have shifted." Therefore, a lot has to happen for Russia to find an interest in any newly revamped OSCE.

For a start, there would have to be a different attitude altogether. If I may make a critical comment, the West always claimed: "Everything is OK with us. Everything's fine here. We must still accomplish a few trifles, but on the whole, you are the ones who have to change." The West showed itself to be a skilful master in this respect. Democracy had only one face for the West: Its own. I would like to add here that my whole inner life has been connected with Northern Europe. Scandinavia, especially Sweden and Denmark, is in my eyes a model of democratic development the way it should be – from the bottom up, not the other way around. That has never worked – I can tell you that from personal experience.

So if one were to try to teach Russia democracy, or anything else for that matter, they would never accept it. They want to do their own thing in their own way; they simply do not think the way Western Europeans do. Western Europeans, Canadians, Americans must understand that it is useless to go to the Russians and say: "We have here our democratic principles, and you need them too." Come on! The world does not work that way.

Having said this, I could nevertheless envisage a future for the OSCE. While I do not believe it could ever become something like NATO or the European Union, the OSCE could nevertheless create a niche for itself within Europe and try to make European peace a reasonably sustainable concept – although peace can never be sure and guaranteed in Europe. There are new weapons: electronic warfare, cyber-warfare, the new systems already being used by the Americans in Afghanistan and Pakistan – the drones. Recently, I read that they are also flying around in German airspace to "provide cover" or something like that.

And there are many potential flashpoints. Take the Baltic States, or Kosovo – all it takes is a mere spark - and boom! You have a big conflict. Recently, I took part in a conference at which some Russian expert spoke about armaments. He said: "We have

our rockets around Kaliningrad, right next to the Baltic States. Now, just remember that all three Baltic States are members of NATO, so if something bad happens there, how should one react? Will we be threatening each other again?" The OSCE could concern itself with such matters, I would say.

But such situations would require experienced diplomats and the readiness at a senior political level to engage in dialogue. The European general public would also have to back them up. The trouble is, you see, that the general public today hardly remembers what the CSCE was all about. I am a little saddened by that, because so much went into it. Both the West and the East always sent their top people to the CSCE – the best they had. They wouldn't send them nowadays. They'd send a third secretary, or someone of similar diplomatic ranking. That is a pity in terms of being ready and fit to engage in political dialogue.

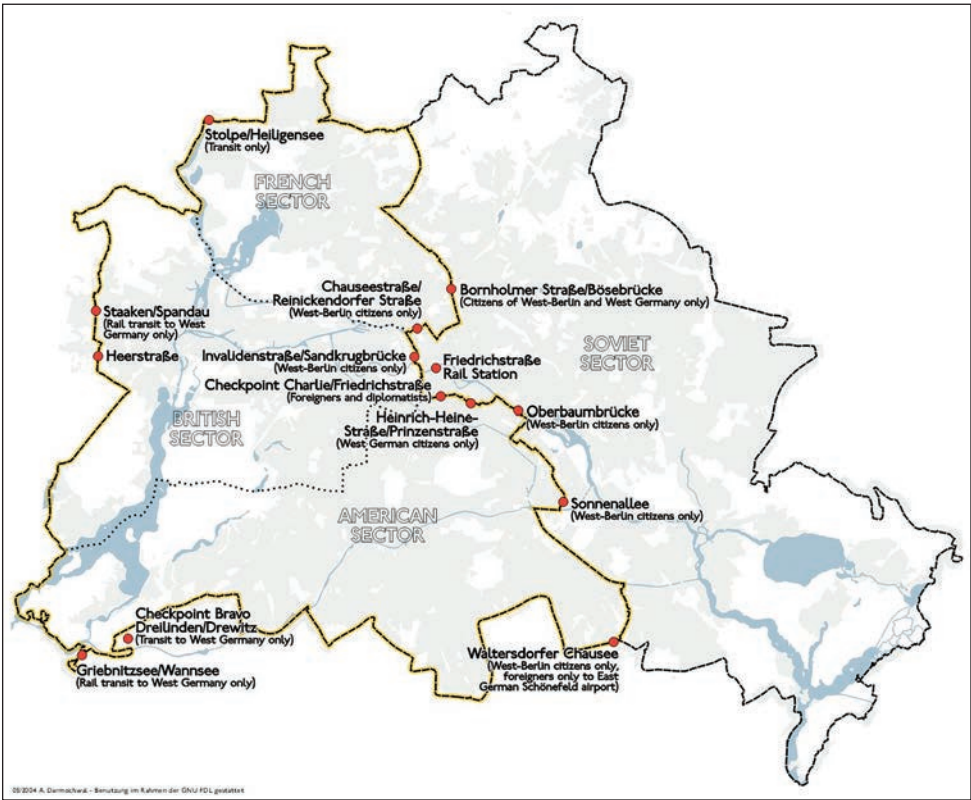
I speak about these things when I meet up with my old colleagues. Looking back, I really did have lots of friends among the people who were involved in diplomacy in Moscow, and I still have a very nice personal relationship with the ex-Ambassadors of the Federal Republic, with whom I worked during the Madrid as well as the Vienna Follow-up Meetings. But most of these people remained friends only to a certain extent. Politics may appear like a game of friendships, but friendship has nothing to do with it. Politics is always based on a game of interests.

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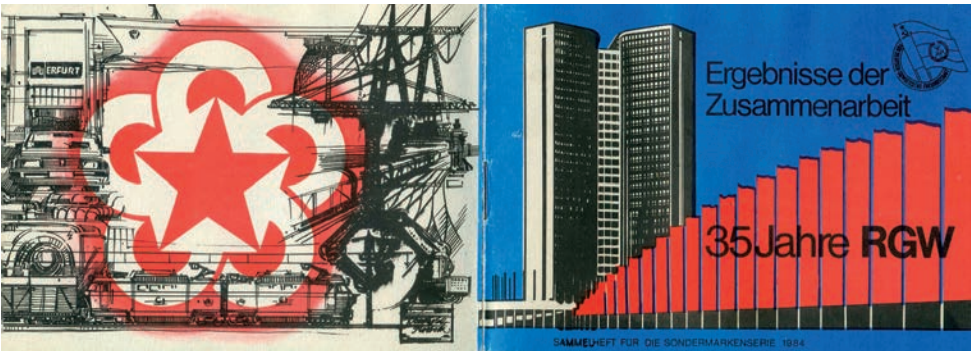
The interview with Ambassador Steglich was conducted in German at his apartment in Berlin, on 7 and 8 June 2012, by Ms. Kristin Kretschmar, graduate student at the Free University in Berlin.



33. Postal stamps issued by the GDR on the occasion of COMECON (RGW in German) anniversaries in 1974 and 1989.



34. Map of the Berlin Wall with check point crossings in use until 1989.



35. COMECON (RGW) commemorative stamp booklet issued by the GDR in 1984.

Peter Steglich

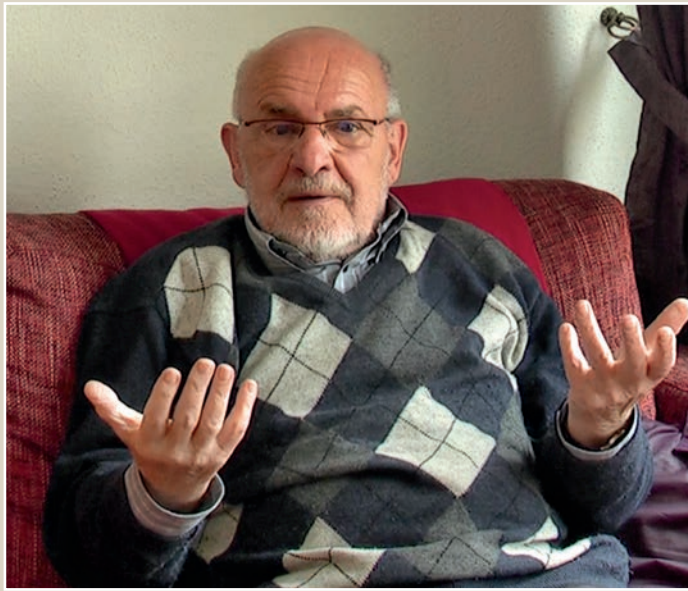
Peter Steglich was born in 1936 in the city of Dresden, which after World War II fell within the borders of the German Democratic Republic.

He spent six years in Moscow studying at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).

Upon his return to the GDR, he entered the Foreign Ministry, focusing on relations with Northern Europe. In 1965, he took up a post as Counsellor at his country's embassy in Helsinki, and in 1968, transferred to the GDR's embassy in Stockholm.

In 1971, he was appointed head of East Germany's trade mission to Sweden, and from 1972 to 1974, he was appointed Ambassador to Sweden.

Between 1974 and 1976, Ambassador Steglich headed the



Northern European Department in the Foreign Ministry of the GDR. He attended the Helsinki Summit in 1975 as Secretary to the GDR delegation.

Subsequently, he was present at the Follow-up Meeting in Madrid (1980–1983) as deputy head of the GDR delegation. He headed the GDR delegation during the Vienna Follow-up Meeting (1986–1989).

After the reunification of Germany, Ambassador Steglich worked in the non-governmental sector.

He has contributed many articles to local press and co-authored a book with Günter Leuschner on the CSCE process, “*KSZE, Fossil oder Hoffnung?*” CSCE Fossil or hope? Edition Ost (1996).



Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1990-009-13
Foto: o.Äng. | 1975

36. Prime Ministers of the two German States exchange views across the alley during the Helsinki Summit. (30 August 1975)



37. The East German delegation under siege of foreign press photographers and cameramen during a session opened to the media. (30 July 1975)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-P0805-314

38. Prime Minister of the FRG, Helmut Schmidt and Prime Minister of the GDR, Erich Honecker. (1 August 1975)



39. Ambassador Steglich co-chairing at a plenary session during the Madrid Follow up Meeting in 1983.

ANNEX	Resolution No.	Title
DECLARATION ON PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW CONCERNING FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION AMONG STATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS	2625 (XXV)	Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (A/8082)

PREAMBLE

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming in the terms of the Charter of the United Nations that the maintenance of international peace and security and the development of friendly relations and co-operation between nations are among the fundamental purposes of the United Nations,

Recalling that the peoples of the United Nations are determined to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours,

Bearing in mind the importance of maintaining and strengthening

equality, justice of their development of their political rights

Bearing in mind the Charter of the United Nations

Considering international obligations of States in accordance with the purposes of the Charter

Noting the importance of scientific and technical cooperation among States

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Convinced that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a major obstacle to the promotion of international peace and security,

Recalling relations of friendly co-operation and mutual respect

Considering it essential that all States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations,

Considering it equally essential that all States shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the Charter,

Reaffirming, in accordance with the Charter, the basic importance of sovereign equality and stressing that the purposes of the United Nations can be implemented only if States enjoy sovereign equality and comply fully with the requirements of this principle in their international relations,

Convinced that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a major obstacle to the promotion of international peace and security,

Convinced that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples constitutes a significant contribution to

taking into account the role of relevant resolutions adopted by the competent organs of the United Nations relating to the content of the principles,

Considering that the progressive development and codification of the following principles:

(a) The principle that States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations,

(a) The principle that States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations,

(b) The principle that States shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered,

(c) The duty not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter,

(d) The duty of States to co-operate with one another in accordance with the Charter,

(e) The principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples,

(f) The principle of sovereign equality of States,

(g) The principle that States shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the Charter,

United Nations, 1883rd plenary meeting, 24 October 1970.

Every State has the duty to refrain from the threat or use of force to violate the existing international boundaries of another State or as a means of solving international disputes, including territorial disputes and problems concerning frontiers of States.

Every State likewise has the duty to refrain from the threat or use of force to violate international lines of demarcation, such as armistice lines, established by or pursuant to an international agreement to which it is a party or which it is otherwise bound to respect. Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed as prejudicing the positions of the parties concerned with regard to the status and effects of such lines under their special régimes or as affecting their temporary character.

States have a duty to refrain from acts of reprisal involving the use of force.

international relations, the domestic Charter, one another in self-determination

good faith the Charter, within the jurisdiction of the

international law relating States,

international relations against the territory of any State, the purposes of

international relations against the territory of any State, or purposes of the Charter, the United Nations

international law, principles of the

40. Excerpt of the UN General Assembly Resolution 2625 adopted in Geneva on 24 October 1970.



Ambassador Mario Michele Alessi of Italy

I had been following East-West relations during most of the 1960s from the perspective of Yugoslavia¹ where I was posted for seven years. Yugoslavia was a sort of political barometer for East-West relations in those years, even if it was very much absorbed with its own concerns. In a way, these were the legitimate concerns of a country which had dissociated itself from Soviet communism, and it was afraid that for that reason the Soviet Union might at some point retaliate. At the same time, it believed it was surrounded by hostile neighbouring countries such as Italy, Austria, the Soviet bloc countries and Albania. Such fears were of course also used to keep the people united and to pre-empt protests against Tito's regime.

For Yugoslavia, the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 had been a terrible happening, eliciting great concern. Some observers even suggested that the Yugoslavs had secretly asked NATO whether it could give them any guarantees in case the Soviets invaded them too. There were also rumours that a plan to divide the country between the East and the West might already exist: The provinces of the former Habsburg Empire would go to the West, the others to the Eastern bloc. As I just said, these were rumours, so I don't know how much any of this was true.

Then, in 1970, I was appointed head of the department in the Foreign Ministry that was responsible for United Nations matters. That year, on 24 October 1970, the

¹ Ambassador Alessi embarked on a career with the Italian Foreign Ministry in 1956. He was subsequently posted at consulates and embassies in France, the United Kingdom and Yugoslavia (1963–1969).

UN General Assembly approved the “Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations”², which was the result of negotiations that had lasted for ten years.

In June 1973, the preliminary stage of the CSCE had yielded its first official document, called the “Blue Book”³. This set the agenda for the second stage in Geneva, both in terms of the rules of procedure and in terms of the goals the Conference was to reach, as well as the topics to be addressed.

My colleagues and I at the United Nations desk at the Foreign Ministry compared the principles listed in the “Blue Book” with those that we had agreed upon at the United Nations some three years before. We noticed that there was one principle too many, given that in the “Blue Book” the inviolability of borders was not integrated within the principle concerning the use of force, or the threat of the use of force in relations between participating States. These two notions had been originally related in the principle that had already been enshrined in Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations⁴; thus, it was thought of as *jus cogens*⁵ – in other words, a principle that was supposed to be binding on all countries, including non-members of the United Nations.

I was puzzled by this wording and wondered: why would the principle of inviolability of borders be separated from the principle of non-aggression or the non-use of force? When we asked a member of our delegation, a linguist expert in Russian, to help us check the Russian version against the English one, we realized there was no mention of inviolability; rather, it referred to the immutability or “untouchability” of borders. This detail alarmed me, and I set to work drafting a memo for the Director General for Political Affairs at the Foreign Ministry, Roberto Ducci⁶ – one of the best Italian ambassadors of our generation and a strong advocate of a political European Union. At that time, politics were discussed only

² Resolution 2625 was adopted on 24 October 1970 at the 1883rd plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly. The annex to this resolution contains all the elements upon which the formulation of the 10 principles enumerated in the *Final Recommendations* (1973) were based (see illustration on p. 140).

³ “The Final Recommendations of the Helsinki Consultations” are referred to as the “Blue Book”, primarily because it was bound in a sky blue paperback cover and “the book”, because it defined the agenda and the modalities, as well as the rules of procedure the CSCE was to be guided by for the subsequent 33 years.

⁴ Article 2, § 4, of the *Charter of the United Nations* states that: “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”.

⁵ *Jus-cogens*: (from Latin: compelling law; English: peremptory norm) refers to certain fundamental, overriding principles of international law, from which no derogation is ever permitted. Examples of *jus cogens* norms include: prohibition of the use of force; the law of genocide; principle of racial non-discrimination; crimes against humanity; and the rules prohibiting trade in slaves or human trafficking.

⁶ Dr. *iusuris*. Roberto Ducci received his Law degree from the University of Rome; his diplomatic career began in 1937; after World War II he acted as counsellor of the Italian delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris in 1946 and later to NATO and the OEEC (1950–1955). In 1957 he headed the drafting committee preparing the Treaty of Rome and he further acted as head of the Italian delegation in the negotiations regarding Italy’s accession to the European Economic Community (1961–1963). He was appointed ambassador to Finland (1958–1961), Yugoslavia (1964–1967) and Austria (1967–1970). From 1970 to 1975 he acted as Director General for Political Affairs at the Foreign Ministry.

among the Directors General⁷ of the foreign ministries of the nine EEC countries on a platform that was called the “Political Committee” and that was foreseen to pave the way to European political cooperation.

So the 1973 Helsinki Final Recommendations had been drafted and the Geneva stage was to start in September of the same year, and you were still appointed to the United Nations Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, is that right?

Yes, one could say that my involvement with the CSCE really began with the drafting of that memo to Ambassador Ducci in the summer of 1973. Subsequently, I left my position as head of the United Nations Office of the Foreign Ministry in Rome and joined in the second stage of the CSCE in Geneva to represent Italy in the committee to deal with questions related to security in Europe (the First Committee). After that, I also went to Helsinki for the Summit. So yes, indeed, I did not take part in the preliminary consultations in Dipoli, Finland, and I came on board only at the time of the second stage in Geneva, in September 1973.

Anyway, to come back to the memo I wrote to Ambassador Ducci, the message it contained was based on the following two concerns: we should not establish a European law that would differ from universal law; and We should not accept Europe becoming a continent with limited sovereignty – after all, why should two States not be allowed to change their borders if they have agreed to do so through legitimate means and for legitimate reasons, such as a people’s right to self-determination?

Was that not an extremely sticky issue in terms of possible vested interests of both East and West Germany, and also the Soviet Union?

Well, let us not forget that the CSCE originated in the policies pursued by countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet Union in particular aimed to establish a Europe in which alliances would no longer be forged. Their primary objective was to equal if not to counterbalance and possibly neutralize the threat NATO represented to them. Separating the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force and that of the inviolability of frontiers would have made it easier, if not to mount an invasion, then at least to establish some sort of “*droit de regard*” [overview] on the part of the USSR over Europe.

While Western Europe had virtually no opportunities to interfere with the Soviet system, the scope for the Soviets to interfere in the politics of Western European countries was definitely greater, given the presence of strong communist parties in France and in Italy in particular. What is more, the Warsaw Pact had not been institutionalized and could thus be easily dismantled without it causing any major repercussions, as it was merely the result of a series of bilateral pacts. Each of them could have remained in force independent of the others, since they included assurances

⁷ Those who held the post of Director General of Political Affairs were focal points within the EEC, who would be physically located in their respective ministries and would travel for meetings to the capital of the country holding the Presidency.

of mutual military assistance that the Soviet Union had signed with each country in the Eastern bloc. So while NATO would have disappeared, the Warsaw Pact would have *de facto* remained as a legal and political instrument binding the Eastern European countries into an alliance.

In light of the fact that no multilateral peace treaty with the defeated Nazi Germany had ever been signed, the Soviet Union had been hoping to secure some sort of formal acceptance of all its territorial annexations, such as the Baltic countries. It had also hoped for acceptance of its border delimitations, together with the division of Germany. The Soviet Union had as its only tool a bilateral treaty signed with West Germany in 1970⁸, and the same year, West Germany had also signed a treaty with Poland.⁹ In this particular treaty, both the Federal Republic and Poland agreed that their borders were determined and declared them inviolable.

The Soviet intent was to obtain not only territorial recognition, but also political recognition – in other words, the West could be democratic and the East could be communist, and the West would accept that any attempts to change this *status quo* would endanger international security.

But just supposing that Europe were one day to be unified in one State and European borders eliminated as a consequence – it was important that the commitments undertaken by the CSCE would in no case include anything that would allow the Soviet Union to hinder any future attempts to make borders in Western Europe more malleable. This would have been unacceptable, especially for Italy at a time when we were in the midst of negotiations with Yugoslavia to determine their new borders.

The other issue mentioned in my memo to Ambassador Ducci, was that we did not want the CSCE to set out any principles that would deviate from universal international law or general law. As a matter of fact, we were strongly against the establishment of any kind of regional system, as we were always opposed to such relativism in international law.

For instance, with regard to human rights, it was obvious that for some countries the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹⁰ was not satisfactory. As far as such countries were concerned, it would have been preferable to have applied a regional human rights system. I am referring in particular to Islamic countries which, having attained

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The Treaty of Moscow was signed on 12 August, 1970 by Willy Brandt and Walter Scheel (for the FRG) and by Alexei Kosygin and Andrey Gromyko (for the USSR). In this Treaty, the FRG “abandoned, at least for the time being, its claims with respect to German self-determination and reunification, recognizing *de facto* the existence of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the Oder-Neisse Line.” Both sides expressed their ambition to strive for a normalization of the relations between the European States while keeping international peace and to follow the guidelines of article 2 of the *UN Charter*.

⁹The so-called Treaty of Warsaw was signed on 7 December, 1970 by Chancellor Willy Brandt (for the FRG) and Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz (for Poland). It was ratified by

the German Bundestag on 17 May 1972. In the Treaty, both sides committed themselves to the non-use of force and accepted the existing border – the Oder-Neisse line imposed on Germany by the Allied powers at the 1945 Potsdam Conference following the end of WW II.

¹⁰The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. The Declaration arose directly from the experience of WW II and constitutes the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled. It consists of 30 articles which have been expanded upon in subsequent international treaties, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions and laws.

independence from the various colonial powers only after the approval of the Universal Declaration in 1948, then stated: “The Declaration was formulated in accordance with your values, but we have our own values and want our own regional law.” On this point we always offered opposition, just as we would never have accepted Europe having a different international law from the universal one – that would have caused serious problems during the implementation of the Helsinki principles.

So to make a long story short, the arguments I advanced in my memo persuaded Director General Ducci. He submitted the memo to the EEC Political Committee, which acknowledged that this issue of wording and principles could backfire against European interests and thus it accepted the Italian initiative. This, in turn, made for our proposal to be also accepted by NATO.

Much of these matters had already been “settled” on the one hand by the treaty signed by both the USSR and Germany and in a number of other bilateral declarations between the USSR and Warsaw pact countries. The Soviets had not expected that this issue of immutability of frontiers would be raised again. For its part, the Federal Republic of Germany could not go back on its desire for ultimate German unity, but it could not be on the front line facing the Soviets on this point. The Italian initiative was therefore handled by Italy during the consultations with Western countries, and even during the subsequent stages of the Conference. The Soviets, at all levels, protested greatly and rebuked Italy more than once, asking it to be more accommodating on this principle, which was of prime importance to them.

In the end, altogether, the Conference lasted for close to two years. We left for Geneva thinking in terms of a three months’ stay at most. Indeed, we had been told: “You will stay there two or three months, as everything has already been worked out – all that needs to be done is to draft the final text”. In fact, we had to go through the first Geneva winter with our summer clothes, which, for some delegations (particularly those who had come from far away capitals) was a real issue.

The fact that the Conference lasted much longer than expected – was that due to unforeseen stumbling blocks or some unyielding claims that surfaced during the process?

Yes, both instances apply, though I have to say that it could have been a lot worse: take for example the so-called conference on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe (MBFR)¹¹. These talks began in parallel with the CSCE in 1972 and they only ended in 1990, so that was a rather more disappointing exercise.

Anyway, as the CSCE progressed, we exposed some delicate diplomatic issues. Old problems re-emerged, such as the dispute over Gibraltar between Spain and Britain, the issue of delimitations of territorial waters between Canada and the United States,

¹¹ In 1972 Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev agreed to hold a separate set of political and military negotiations. It was agreed that the CSCE would deal with political issues, while military issues would be addressed at the talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR). These negotiations were stalled by the USSR in 1979 because of NATO’s decision to deploy new intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

and many others. It was a kind of upheaval of history. Things that had been forgotten or were unknown would keep cropping up; the only way to proceed was to collect all the proposals and to stick to specific criteria when drafting the texts.

Even apart from these issues, the CSCE negotiations turned out to be extremely complex. Towards the end of the Geneva stage, the USSR succeeded in exerting significant pressure on the Italian Government through its Ambassador in Rome, as well as through the head of the Soviet delegation to the CSCE. The tacit message was to pass on some points which were hampering the conclusion of the Conference, or for Italy, as one of the nine European Economic Community countries, to at least do its very best to help reach a conclusion. Had this not been the case, we might possibly still be negotiating!

There was a kind of agreement in place between the EEC countries at the time to streamline the process. Every morning, the group of the EEC Nine would meet to decide the line to follow during that day's session. This collective line would be redefined day by day.

In the First Committee, the work advanced very slowly. We agreed on certain sets of words. Many of them were in brackets, with alternative options. There was a lot of ... I won't call it "blackmail" so much as "conditions for negotiations": "I will not accept A until you accept B." This type of horse-trading is, however, perfectly usual in these types of talks. We therefore proceeded with provisional solutions, which would then have to be finalized before the Geneva stage could be closed.

Over and above such daily coordination effort between the "EEC Nine", did this evident "economic alliance" not bother the non-EEC countries who came to Geneva to discuss a wider concept of economic cooperation?

If it is true that the coordination of the Nine in the CSCE was a very successful test of the still embryonic European political cooperation, it is also true that the participation of the European Economic Community in the negotiations pertaining to matters in the "second basket" was not easy for the Eastern and non-EEC member countries to swallow. The arguments in favour of its participation as a bloc were sound: within the Nine, some powers had already been devolved to the European Economic Community – for example, there had been some transfer of sovereignty on economic matters, agricultural policy, free markets, etc.: The so-called "Common Market". As a result, the EEC member States could not take their own individual decisions on topics that were within the remit of the European Commission. That is why the European Commission sent its delegates to Geneva to attend all the negotiations pertaining to economic issues, in other words the second basket subcommittee.

But let me tell you another story about the way in which the EEC left its mark on the Final Document. As a participant in the negotiations and having its own remit on specific matters, the European Economic Community was entitled to and had a duty to sign the *Helsinki Final Act*. So in order to streamline the fulfillment of this duty, we came up with what was possibly the only feasible solution for the smooth implementation of our responsibilities. When the time came for the *Helsinki Final Act* to be signed, Italy held the rotating Presidency of the European Economic Community. Therefore we put

forth a proposal whereby the head of the Italian delegation to Helsinki, Prime Minister Aldo Moro¹², would sign the document twice: once for Italy and once on behalf of the European Economic Community.

This proposal was not welcomed by the Eastern European countries, which retorted that they too had a consultative council, the Comecon¹³, which was a kind of association that had been set up to facilitate trade and the division of labour among all the countries within the Soviet constellation. Comecon was not institutionalized; that is to say, it did not have any regulating or overseeing institutions able to implement and follow up on its decisions.¹⁴ Rather, it was a consulting mechanism. It perhaps took joint decisions, but it did not have any institutions with specific areas of responsibility, as had the European Economic Community.

The issue of the EEC's undisclosed presence was discussed right up until the very end of the Helsinki process, but one can say it was settled by a unanimous agreement reached on the proposal that Aldo Moro would sign the *Final Act* twice. The order of the signing was decided by lot, and so on the first day he signed as the Italian Prime Minister, and on the second day as a representative of the European Economic Community, a peculiarity during the end of the negotiations that did not go by unnoticed.

Was the need for the different delegations to consult with their respective capitals something that held up proceedings?

Not so much in general, though every country had problems with its central authorities at some point or other. There were delegations, such as Liechtenstein, that could operate without consulting their capitals: the head of the diplomatic service of Liechtenstein was participating in the Conference and could therefore act as his own consultant. There were delegations that could receive instructions very rapidly; others could instruct themselves and did not even need to ask their capitals for confirmation. And then there were those that at times asked for a suspension of proceedings on certain points because they had to wait for their foreign ministries to reply on a political or legal point. Most often the reply would come within a reasonable length of time. Plus, many delegations already had preliminary instructions, so they would follow them and adapt them according to the development of the negotiations.

When a legal issue had to be resolved, we had to consult the diplomatic legal department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which would then present us with their opinion and legal assessment. However, it would take days before their decision reached us, so we relied a lot on the Canadian delegation, which could receive an answer from

¹² Aldo Moro (1916–1978) was Prime Minister of Italy from 1963 to 1968 and again from 1974 to 1976. On 16 March 1978 Moro was kidnapped for his position as leader of the Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democratic party) by the left-wing paramilitary organization called “Red Brigades”, and was killed after 55 days in captivity.

¹³ “Comecon” is a contraction of the Russian for “Council for Mutual Economic Assistance”, an economic association

of East European countries founded in 1949 and considered to be analogous to the European Economic Community. In 1991, after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the association was dissolved.

¹⁴ Also see the interview with Ambassador Andréani, chapter III, describing Comecon in similar terms.

its own central legal department within 24 hours. The head of the Canadian team in the subcommittee dealing with the principles guiding mutual relations of the participating States, on which I also sat, had been seconded from that legal department and therefore had a special relationship with the people there, so he could obtain the counsel that we all needed immediately.

Towards the end of the Conference, it became necessary for our delegation to be better equipped with linguistic and legal experts in the various fields and subjects that were to be discussed. There were times when the Conference proceeded sluggishly and we wasted our time going over and over the same things. There was an increasing number of working groups working on texts full of brackets that still had to be finalized, and these groups often laboured late into the night. Sometimes we had to actually stop the clocks in order to be able to finish by midnight of the day on which we were supposed to conclude our proceedings. It goes without saying that the pressure on people's personal lives was enormous. The Europeans would perhaps manage one weekend from time to time at home, but it was even more difficult for the Soviets, not to speak of the Canadians and Americans, of course. They really had to make Geneva their home – as if they had been posted there to a diplomatic position and not to attend a conference.

During the different phases of the Conference, the composition of delegations changed a lot. What kind of relationship were you able to establish among yourselves in your delegation under these circumstances and what relationship did you maintain with other delegations?

The Italian delegation had a well tuned team spirit and a results-oriented approach, just like all the other delegations, I would suppose. Of course, our instructions came from the Foreign Ministry, but we had prepared a lot of the instructions ourselves in reaction to developments in the negotiations, so we did not need to worry about any surprises coming from Rome that could suddenly throw us off track.

The Italian delegation was made up of people who had embraced the cause of the Conference and who identified with the relevance, the benefits and the risks that the Conference had for our own country and the West as whole. There was not a single episode of disagreement within our delegation; we were truly all focused on the progress of the negotiations. And not just among ourselves – we had frequent meetings with other delegations and we all formed a team, always keeping abreast of what was going on and the goals being pursued.

Of course, during such a lengthy period of negotiations as was Geneva, there were people who had to leave and replacements were arranged by the Ministry. We always had to explain to the newcomers the principles and procedures and how we went about agreeing on certain common objectives with other Western and EEC delegations. The Italian officials who took part in this diplomatic adventure all went on to enjoy excellent careers and remained friends.

We also established very good relationships with the other Western delegations, as well as with the neutrals and non-aligned. The CSCE was indeed a great school for the whole generation of diplomats who took part in the process. We had to try to

impose our principles without precluding possible compromises. There were some issues on which there could be no compromise. But some things were said only by way of opening discussions on other, more negotiable, issues. It was a graduate school for negotiation skills, and I think all the participants were enriched by it. The experience proved very useful later on in my own work.

Here, I would like to cite an episode that illustrates the Soviet negotiating skills. Once, when I was having breakfast in Geneva with the Soviet Ambassador, Lev Mendelevich, I asked him about their negotiating *modus operandi*. He replied: “Let me tell you. We always start by stating that there is a principle on which we cannot, under any circumstances, compromise, and that is that dogs have six legs. And we press on, insisting on this point. You then reply: ‘We can only offer you evidence that dogs have four legs.’ We reply: ‘Absolutely not. Your evidence is worthless, and I have received clear instructions from my Foreign Ministry not to give ground on this point.’ So we carry on like this until we wear out the opponent. At this point, displaying great generosity, we declare: ‘Just in order to reach an agreement – just to satisfy you – let us say that dogs have five legs.’ The opponent gives in because he is exhausted and immediately sends a telegram to his Ministry: ‘We have achieved a real breakthrough – the opposing delegation has accepted that dogs have five legs and not six.’ The Ministry replies with congratulations on a successful conclusion to the negotiations. So, this was an unforgettable lesson I received in Soviet negotiating skills.

It may be of interest to the Prague-based CSCE/OSCE archives that in 1976 (or maybe a year later), the Italian team produced a rather weighty tome – an account of the entire CSCE negotiations, from start to finish, including all the written proceedings in all the committees and subcommittees. Given that no minutes were taken during these meetings, the only way to collect these facts was to gather all the Italian delegation’s *chefs de file*¹⁵ for all the baskets and ask them to contribute to this joint effort.

All the correspondence from that time, including the telegrams, some of which remain classified to this day, is still stored in the archives of the Italian Foreign Ministry. As for the conference documents, the ones that were circulated on a daily basis, these were the so-called “non-papers” (i.e., documents that had neither authorship nor document code). A document that had a code and a date, and possibly the name of the delegation that was sponsoring it, was called a “proposal”. These documents could be as short as a few lines or even a single sentence, or they could contain brackets, options and everything else, but they primordially served to record how far the negotiations had got. I bound together and kept all such documents pertaining to our delegation – I don’t think anything similar exists elsewhere. Maybe this collection could find a home in the CSCE/OSCE archives deposited in Prague?¹⁶

¹⁵ Under the *chef de file* system, individual delegations were given responsibility for specific subjects to be covered by the *Final Act*. The responsibilities were shared out according to the importance of a subject to any particular country. West Germany, for example, took responsibility for “human contacts” (i.e., the reunification of families) from the third basket.

¹⁶ The personal archives collected by Ambassador Alessi were integrated in the CSCE/OSCE historical archives maintained by the OSCE Prague Office in October 2012.

Can you think of an example of how Italy benefited from the principles enshrined at Helsinki?

The obvious example to note here is that there had been some significant disputes regarding minorities between Italy and Yugoslavia. Our Slovenian minorities lived in a democratic country and hence enjoyed a high level of protection. This was not enough for them, as they also needed bilingual schools and bilingual signs on the roads. But much more serious were the problems of the Italians who had remained in Istria and Dalmatia.

Then there was the problem of the border between Italy and Slovenia. Difficult negotiations were already under way, and relations with Yugoslavia were problematic.¹⁷ In spite of this, at Geneva we established excellent relations with the Yugoslav delegation and we could discuss almost anything. It was at the CSCE that the participating States could agree on principles for settling the issues of minorities and the questions of borders, on the basis of agreements between countries reached on a free and peaceful basis. So there were many issues that brought us closer to Yugoslavia, a country which, in theory, was a rival and with which we were still locked in a number of disputes.

Is there any episode or anecdote you like to remember from those times that could illustrate the uniqueness or specificity of the CSCE?

Well, there was this one episode: when we were negotiating the issue of freedom of religion to include in the Declaration of Principles, the Soviets stated that “The term ‘freedom of religion’ is not adequate for us; we have freedom of atheism in our country and atheists are not discriminated against. In fact, there are schools of atheism at our universities. We must therefore find a different formulation to reflect this reality.”

Consequently, they suggested a formulation that mentioned freedom of conviction regarding religion, among other things. We therefore proceeded in this way almost until the very end of the Conference, when more restrictive instructions were received from Moscow. In substance the message said: “We do not agree with this formulation, as it also leaves room for freedom of political convictions.” You see, if we use the term ‘freedom of conviction’, it would imply to allow the establishment of liberal or democratic parties in the communist countries.

So at that point, the Soviets backtracked on their first statement. They now maintained: “It would be better to opt for freedom of religion or worship after all!” That was a complete turnaround. The Soviets were now upholding religion, while the Western countries were advocating freedom of conviction, having realized that this concept had explosive potential for the Soviet bloc. That is how it came about that



¹⁷ In 1947, the Peace Treaty with Italy declared the city of Trieste and the surrounding area an independent State. “The Free Territory of Trieste” was split into two zones: one fell under American and British administration and the second was placed under the control of the Yugoslav forces. In 1954 it was taken over by its two neighbours. The border

questions with Yugoslavia and the status of the ethnic minorities (Slovenes in Italy and Italians in Yugoslavia) were settled definitively with the Treaty of Osimo, signed on 10 November 1975 by Mariano Rumor, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Miloš Minić, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia. (See illustrations on p. 163)

the Holy See delegation would find the Communist bloc supporting the freedom of religion and the Western countries no longer wanting it!

By the way, I would like to emphasize the role that the Holy See played here. I cannot remember for how many years or centuries the Holy See had not taken part in international multilateral meetings, but this time it took an active and constructive part in the discussions on the issue of freedom of religion, which – as I said – was discussed at length and in depth until the end of the Conference. So, I would say this is a good example of CSCE's uniqueness.

Another anecdote that comes to mind in this connection is about the words “shall” or “will”. Every time they occurred in the text, which had been almost finalized by spring of 1975, Henry Kissinger turned them down and said we had to replace them: “Check and double-check everything and replace ‘shall’ or ‘will’ with ‘should’ and ‘would’ so the text is less binding.”

In fact, towards the end of the negotiations, we received a warning note from the United States along these lines: “Be careful of your language: Do not formulate anything in a way that would make your decisions binding. Nothing can have a contractual, mandatory or binding nature. Otherwise, we will have to submit everything to Congress for approval.” This was presumably due to the fact that there had been some heated discussions in Congress about Vietnam not long before, and so it was no wonder that Kissinger had no intention of wrestling with Congress yet again. Such a turnaround came as a great disappointment for our delegations, and even more for the neutral and non-aligned, but was obviously welcomed by the Eastern group, who had started to have doubts about an outcome of the Conference not corresponding to their original objectives.

Because of these language issues and because the slightest nuance could change the meaning of a sentence negotiated at great length, language conforming groups arose. Each group had to check the text in their own language and note any mistakes in the meaning or semantic changes that may have occurred during translation. It was not always possible to find the exact equivalent of certain words: So many times, we had to play around with the meaning in order to have the idea fit into equivalent terms. If one would take the time to examine the Russian text, one could find words which were not exactly what we would have wanted them to be, but so much of this process was precisely about linguistic nuances.

All the participating States at the Conference had committed to letting their respective publics know of the outcome of the Conference. Did you keep some kind of press book or a record with newspaper clippings?

The commitment to publish the full results of the Conference in the main print media of the participating States had been requested by both the Western countries and those of the neutral and the non-aligned group. I have put together a great collection of newspaper clippings, and not just from the Italian press.

When this idea had first been advanced, the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact members balked at this, but could present no real arguments against the proposal. After all, they

were the ones who had yearned to hold the Conference over several years, so it would have been counterproductive for them not to publish its results. Anyway, they accepted the commitment to publication in the end and followed up on the promise.

There was a certain degree of scepticism among the Western countries as to whether the full text of the *Helsinki Final Act* would indeed be published in the East. In fact, this duly occurred the day after the end of the Conference – it was published in *Pravda*, the most widely-read newspaper in the entire Soviet Union. And, of course, it was translated and also published in newspapers in each of the other participating States.

It should be added that the Soviet leadership only got around to reading the text of the *Helsinki Final Act* just before it was submitted for signing. Some qualms then arose on their side, but it was too late at that point. This does not mean that the Soviets refrained from making remarks or commentaries about the process in quite a critical tone. For example, just a few months after the signing of the *Final Act*, in December 1975, Michail Suslov,¹⁸ who was to some extent the ideologist of the Kremlin and of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, published an article in *Pravda* entitled “Peaceful Coexistence and Social Progress”. In this article he rejected any other nation’s right to interfere with the USSR’s internal affairs – the *Helsinki Final Act* notwithstanding – and he characterized the Helsinki commitments as constituting “a reflection of bourgeois concepts of pluralism and human rights”.

And what about the Italian press? How closely did they follow the CSCE?

The press in Italy and in the Western countries took an interest in the first stage in Helsinki and in the start of the second stage in Geneva, but then they got tired of it when the negotiations started dragging on and other events claimed their attention. Besides, not all the meetings were open to the public and no press conferences were held, so in general the press was wondering what we were doing locked away from public view, what the purpose of the Conference was, what progress had been made in the negotiations and why it was all taking so long. In short, people lost track of CSCE during the Geneva stage and then they lost interest in the proceedings as such.

Due to the scarcity of news filtering through to the media, the Italian press was thrown completely off the scent. I don’t know whether this was due to the scant interest paid by the journalists or to pressure from communist cultural and press circles, which, as I mentioned before, carried considerable weight in Italy. The Italian Communist Party was the biggest communist party in Europe (after the Soviet one, of course).

I don’t think there was a single newspaper in Italy that analysed the *Helsinki Final Act* and looked carefully at each of its principles and provisions. The text was published, with general comments, but the true impact or implied meaning of each provision of the *Helsinki Final Act* was never properly assessed.

¹⁸ Mikhail Andreyevich Suslov (1902–1982) served as Second Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (and unofficial chief ideologue of the Party) from 1965 until his death. He was one of the foremost anti-reformist Soviet leaders.

During the 1970s and the 1980s, Italy was marked by terrorist atrocities – those were the *anni di piombo* [the “years of lead”]. Against this backdrop, how could the ordinary middle-class Italian citizen see a promise of a better future in the Helsinki Decalogue? In such a complex political situation, how could one nurture any hope for a true and secure democracy?

In those years, the political situation in Italy was characterized by some disaffection and the renewal of the Italian Communist Party, more or less as a direct result of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. At that time, the Italian Communist Party was an affiliate of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Party controlled a large slice of the country’s culture, newspapers, and economy. The Central Committee of the CPSU made no secret of the fact that they fostered and financed the Italian Communist Party.

When Czechoslovakia was invaded, there were many second thoughts. Gradually, the Italian Communist Party started to move away from the Soviet Party. Some sections of the left turned into an extremist fringe, but it is hard to tell whether all the terrorists came from that fringe, since there could also have been some convergence with far-right terrorism. It was not possible to change a political system like the one in Italy because it was characterized by a degree of elasticity, with the government changing every 11 months on average, but remaining basically always the same, more or less. It was a sort of rubber wall against which it was difficult to fight in order to bring about real change.

The Red Brigades never put forward any political programme. They only tried to sabotage and destroy the system in place with terrorist acts perpetrated against journalists, politicians, university professors, and anyone who had a role in Italian society. It was a series of villainous crimes and episodes surrounded by a halo of mystery and secrets, some of which are yet to be revealed.

When the CSCE negotiations were taking place, Italy was going through a politically fragile period, but somehow, these negotiations also facilitated a kind of cooperation between the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party, or at least they contributed to the end of their confrontation. These were the times when the term “demo-communist” was coined. It referred to a shift towards a centre-left grouping which could be viable and could govern the country with the more or less direct support of the left-wing forces.

You reflected on your observations of East-West relations while you were in Yugoslavia, before the 1970s. To what extent did you see these relations evolve and did you note any direct impact of the provisions agreed in Helsinki on the European political scene?

Progress after the Summit in 1975 was very slow, mainly because the parallel negotiations on the MBFR became bogged down. This was an important factor for the West. The Soviet military position was far stronger than that of the West. In fostering the CSCE, the Soviets had hoped to bring about a *détente* that would somehow throw NATO off balance and facilitate the withdrawal of American troops from Europe.

The Kremlin may have been thinking that since there was a written and signed guarantee that the Soviets would not try to invade Western Europe, this would

encourage already active Western European movements to speak out against NATO. Indeed, many Westerners were wondering why American troops were still in Europe even if, years earlier, Democrat Senator Mike Mansfield¹⁹ had put forward a proposal to withdraw American troops. His proposal had unfortunately been voted down by the Senate and had not been brought up again while he was in office.

On the other hand, the Soviet plan to weaken NATO by showing a conciliatory, a more human face in East-West relations did help to foster pacifist and feminist movements throughout Europe. So, on the one hand, while political dissent movements were emerging in Russia, on the other, we could see a wave of pacifism sweeping the young away, and feminist movements emerging just about everywhere in Western Europe. I would say there was a general easing of vigilance. Still, the United States was far away, and a Soviet invasion could have covered the whole of Europe – all the way to Gibraltar – within 24 to 48 hours. The conventional Soviet troops at the borders constituted an enormous power. We are not talking about nuclear weapons – that was unthinkable at the time; nevertheless, conventional armed forces constituted just as much of a real threat.

Don't forget – at the end of World War II, all the Western countries had sent their soldiers home and had started to convert their war industries to civilian industry. In the Soviet Union, this never happened; there everything continued as if they needed to be prepared for another conflict. They were still on the alert. The negotiations for the reduction of conventional forces, as I have said earlier, dragged on right until 1990,²⁰ that is, up until the demise of Soviet communism.

Many historians and political scientists advance the notion that the CSCE helped to bring about the end of communism. What is your outlook on this turn of events and its connections with the CSCE process?

The factors causing the demise of Soviet politics were manifold – it was a convergence of factors. For one thing, Soviet economic efforts were heavily focused on the war industry. They picked their best nuclear scientists straight from the universities and there was this particular culture that was neither oriented towards consumer goods nor towards enhancing or improving human development: So to think that such a society would evolve towards a more cohesive mass would have been naïve. Also, the Kremlin was facing great economic difficulties at the time. There were no funds in the Soviet Union to counteract or match the United States; the announcement of Reagan's "Star Wars"²¹ programme only increased the pressure. The Soviet system could not put

¹⁹Mike Mansfield (1903–2001), US democratic Senator from Montana and the Senate Majority Leader from 1961 to 1977, had called on the US Senate to reduce the number of US troops stationed in Europe by half in 1971.

²⁰On 19 November 1990, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed in Paris by 22 States, on the margins of the CSCE Paris Summit. The Treaty is regarded as the cornerstone of conventional stability and security from the Atlantic to the Urals and is the product of many years of negotiation on force limitations conducted within the framework of the then CSCE. The CFE Treaty is a legally binding agreement.

²¹United States President Ronald Reagan proposed the creation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in 1983. This project consisted in the construction of a space-based anti-missile system. The US media immediately dubbed the programme "Star Wars". The SDI was intended to defend the United States from attack by intercepting incoming missiles, using extremely advanced technological systems that had yet to be researched and developed. The Soviets feared that the SDI would enable the United States to launch a first strike against them. Although work was begun on the programme, the technology proved to be too complex and much of the research was cancelled by later administrations.

additional pressure on its people to produce extra resources to allocate to armaments. So to my mind, these were some of the factors that led to the break-up of the Soviet Union.

What is also undisputed is that the *Final Act*, bearing as it did Brezhnev's signature, had an important, sensational effect. For the first time, the issues of human rights, freedom of religion, freedom of worship, freedom of movement and of contacts between the people and institutions of all countries had been addressed by Eastern leaderships. All of this gave rise to dissent within the Soviet Union itself – dissent which slowly came to light and grew, without taking a definite institutional shape throughout the whole of Europe. So the CSCE certainly may have worked as a worm, gnawing away at the ideology and the system of the Eastern European countries.

Now to answer your question, I would say that yes, the *Helsinki Final Act* played a role in the geopolitical changes that swept through Europe in the early 90s. As I mentioned, dissident groups were being formed in Warsaw Pact countries and a number of civic movements, such as the Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, started to emerge, questioning the legitimacy of certain forms of repression used by the systems in place. Their ideas remained latent in the social, intellectual and cultural fabric of all these countries.

Another indirect result of the *Helsinki Final Act* was the formation of the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland.²² Also, the election of a Polish Pope, John Paul II, was not entirely unrelated to the CSCE processes. In Poland, this inspired the idea that even religion was an important value for some countries. It also inspired the idea that Marxist doctrine was not the one and only, but that there was also another doctrine that mattered in Europe and in the world, and that was Christian doctrine.

And then apart from the ideological aspect, there was also a very concrete, practical factor for the communist regime to topple: People were tired of making sacrifices. In Hungary, for example, the cohabitation of households was still in force, with three or four families living in shared accommodation. This is to say that the system was also starting to creak from the inside.

You said earlier that one of the aims the Soviets had for this Conference was to “equal if not neutralize the counterweight of NATO”. Do you think the Russians could still use the OSCE to reach such goals?

Yes, but they failed to do so. Consider that, in 1994, when pretty much everything had already happened and most of the major changes had started to take shape, NATO was not disbanded. The Warsaw Pact was made obsolete, but not NATO. The organization did go through a period of crisis: It had been set up to face an enemy and with the disappearance of that enemy it was now at a loss.

²²Solidarity (*Solidarnosc*) was a Polish trade union federation that emerged on 31 August 1980 at the Gdansk shipyard, under the leadership of Lech Watesa. It was the Warsaw Pact's first trade union that was not communist-controlled. A coalition government was formed in August 1989 and Watesa was elected President of Poland in December 1990.

An enemy was being sought and this search was made easier by the rise of terrorism. Fighting terrorism was identified as a means of reinvigorating NATO and providing it with the function of using military means to combat a clearly-identified enemy. It was an enemy of a completely different nature – elusive, having no capital assets or army. Therefore, the whole strategic doctrine of NATO had to be adapted, the quantities of arms and human resources had to be reduced, and NATO was converted into a system of rapid operations undertaken by limited forces against terrorist targets. It is always difficult to close down an international organization: once established, they are very unlikely to disappear.

What is more, NATO expanded to include several Eastern European countries which were once members of the Warsaw Pact. The closer they came to the Russian border, the more nervous the Kremlin got. There was reason to believe that the Russians wanted to turn the CSCE into a well-defined organization, strong enough to somehow function as an umbrella organization for NATO, which would then become the military branch of an organization encompassing all the NATO States, plus all the others from the CSCE. In other words, the intention was to transform the CSCE into a political organization, of which NATO would become the military component.

This, obviously, did not go down well with the Western countries or with NATO itself. That is why the Soviet idea was not accepted at the CSCE Review Conference in Budapest in 1994; instead it was reaffirmed that, following the transformation of the CSCE into the OSCE on 1 January 1995, the OSCE would remain a consultative forum in accordance with the rules inherited from the CSCE and would guarantee the continuity of the commitments undertaken in Helsinki in 1975.

The OSCE then expanded its role in many ways, but the important thing in my eyes is that the consensus rule was maintained. Reaching consensus is a hard thing to do. It means trying to adopt decisions on the basis of the lowest common denominator, obtaining everybody's agreement by means of a compromise. Consensus does not mean unanimous voting. Consensus means – and this is the way it was defined – the absence of any objection raised by a participating State and made in the interests of its own security. This is the definition of the consensus rule. This means that not everyone needs to raise their hand to signal their consent. One State can also decide to abstain, or make a formal and non-binding objection. But a consensus is not reached if one State says: “No, I cannot accept this because it would affect our national security.” So, due to these procedural rules²³, the decision-making process in the OSCE is as complex today as it was at the time of the CSCE.

²³ The consensus rule is defined in the Rules of Procedure included in chapter 6 of the CSCE Helsinki Final Recommendations, part 4, § 69, as follows:[...] “Decisions of the Conference shall be taken by consensus. Consensus

shall be understood to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a Representative and submitted by him as constituting an obstacle to the taking of the decision in question.”[...].


In light of what you just said, do you think the OSCE still has a role to play on the political and social scene of international organizations today? If so, which of the initial three CSCE dimensions has been best carried over from the Conference to the Organization in your eyes?

The protection of human rights is what I think to be the CSCE's fundamental legacy. Before 1948, the question of human rights had been considered a solely internal issue. Every democratic constitution referred to the protection of human rights, but it had been purely the concern of each individual country or State. It was not until 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights put human rights above the rights of States, that human rights became an international issue.

Incidentally, a similar instance also arose within the CSCE, because some of the basic principles lent themselves to be interpreted as contradictory to some other principles. If, for instance, a country believed that the abolition of the death penalty was a strictly internal issue and did not wish to have any interference on this issue from the outside, then the principle of non-interference or non-intervention would prevail. This of course clashed with the principle stating that the protection of human rights should be paramount. Therefore, it was decided that one could not invoke a principle in order to infringe on another one. With regard to some issues, this is easier said than done.

But over and above the cause of human rights, the OSCE inherited everything and is the guardian of the values enshrined in the *Helsinki Final Act*. Without the OSCE, the *Final Act* would have sunk into complete oblivion, with all its fundamental links between humanitarian and politico-military aspects. As a matter of fact, the OSCE continues to hinge on this close link between the humanitarian aspect of its activities and the political impetus of its negotiations. For instance, with regard to minorities, the OSCE has a set of recommendations on conferring protection on minorities. The issue of minorities is a long-standing problem, often giving rise to friction. I mentioned the case of Italy and Yugoslavia; there were also issues between Italy and Austria, very serious ones. All of these have been addressed on a bilateral basis. Nevertheless, having an international organization which can bring together all the participating States and make the safeguard of their security a binding commitment is essential. The participating States of the CSCE regard themselves as being joined in the task of guaranteeing the security of one other²⁴.

The OSCE has continued to foster the human dimension in its many aspects. For instance, a number of its peacekeeping or monitoring field missions have been not only successful, but also essential in post-conflict countries. In such situations they have dealt not only with military, political and electoral issues, but also with human rights. This gives OSCE missions a sense of unity of intent between maintaining the peace on


²⁴ In the 1994 CSCE Budapest Summit Declaration, it states that: [...] "the Heads of State or Government of the States participating in the CSCE (...) will build genuine security partnership among all participating States, whether or not they are members of other security organizations. In

doing so, they will be guided by the CSCE's comprehensive concept of security and its indivisibility, as well as by their commitment not to pursue national security interests at the expense of others".

As you know, the current Secretary General of the OSCE is an Italian, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, and I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to him: he is a colleague of great value, with whom I have had the pleasure of working and whom I highly esteem for the personal contribution he has already made and continues to make to the Organisation.

I thank you for providing me with this opportunity to recollect.

■■■■

The interview with Ambassador Alessi was conducted in Italian on the premises of the Prague Office of the OSCE Secretariat on 21 and 22 June 2012, by Ms. Monica Ercolani (independent reporter).



41.

Mario Michele Alessi

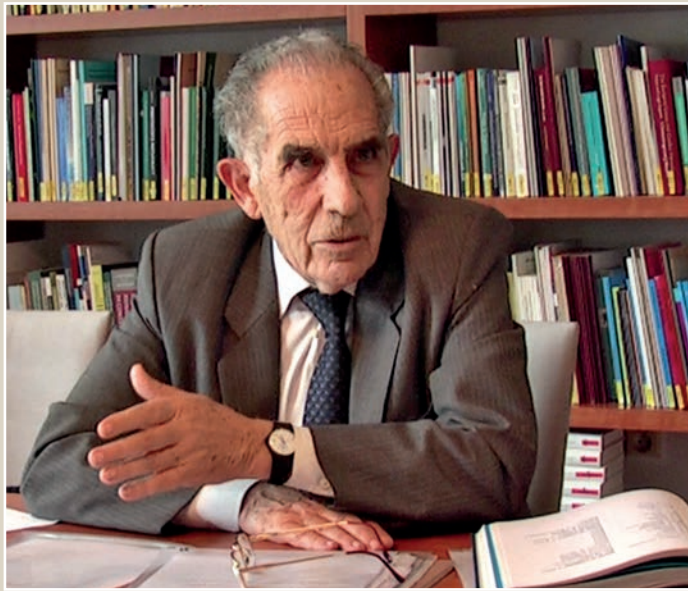
Mario Michele Alessi was born in 1931 in Ragusa, Sicily. He studied international law at the University of Palermo before undertaking a Fulbright postgraduate course in political science at the University of Kansas in the United States.

Between 1950 and 1960, Mr. Alessi worked as a journalist for various newspapers and periodicals. In 1956, he embarked on a career with the Italian Foreign Ministry. Over the next 11 years, he was posted to consulates and embassies in France (1959–1962), the United Kingdom (1962–1964) and Yugoslavia (1964–1967).

In 1970, Ambassador Alessi was appointed head of the department that oversaw matters concerning the United Nations in the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His analytical skills and experience in multilateral diplomacy secured him a place in Italy's delegation to the second stage of the CSCE in Geneva (1973–1975), where he headed the negotiating team dealing with political and security issues. He was also present at the 1975 Helsinki Summit, with Italy's Prime Minister, Aldo Moro.

From 1974 to 1979, Ambassador Alessi held the post of Minister in the Italian delegation to the United Nations in Geneva. On the occasion of Italy's presidency of the Council of the European Union, between 1979 and 1980, he was made responsible for the coordination of the relations with countries of the European Economic Community.

From 1981 to 1984, Ambassador Alessi served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva; during



this time, he also acted as Italy's *chargé d'affaires* to the international organizations in Geneva; from 1985 to 1988 he took up the post of Ambassador of Italy to the international organizations located in Vienna.

From 1988 to 1994, Ambassador Alessi served as Assistant Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome.




Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Ambassador Alessi led a number of Italian delegations to international conferences addressing issues of non-proliferation and human rights. In 1995, he was accredited member of the Court of Conciliation and Arbitration of the OSCE, a function he still holds now.

He taught international relations

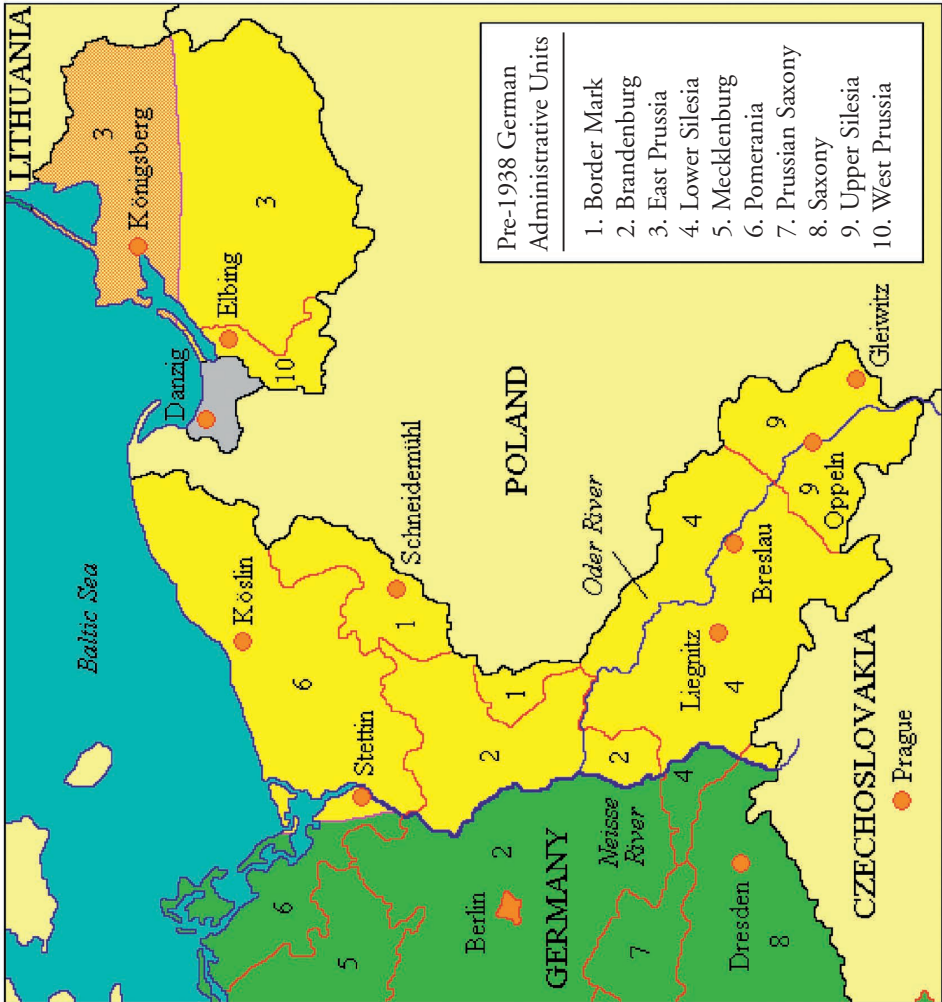
and lectured on international organizations at academic institutions in Florence and Rome from 1980 to 2006. At the present times he continues to take an active part in associations dealing with international relations and human rights.

Ambassador Alessi has authored and contributed to many publications and journals on international affairs. Among such contributions is a publication by L.V. Ferraris: *“Testimonianze di un negoziato – Helsinki – Ginevra – Helsinki”*, CEDAM, Padova 1977. The English version: *“Report on a Negotiation – Helsinki – Geneva – Helsinki, 1972–1975”* was published by the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva in 1979.

The Oder-Neisse Line and Germany's postwar territorial losses

-  Territory lost to Poland 1945
-  Postwar Germany
-  Northern East Prussia was annexed by the Soviet Union

1. The Border Mark included those parts of the former Prussian districts of Posen and West Prussia which were not lost to Poland in 1918, apart from the area of West Prussia around Elbinge.
2. All the areas of Germany on this map apart from Saxony were part of the pre-war State of Prussia.
3. Danzig was a Free City administered by the League of Nations 1919-1939.
4. Stettin and the surrounding area were were annexed to Poland despite being west of Oder-Neisse line.
5. The map uses English forms of the German names of the cities and regions annexed by Poland in 1945. This does not imply any position on the "correct" form of these names.



- Pre-1938 German Administrative Units
1. Border Mark
 2. Brandenburg
 3. East Prussia
 4. Lower Silesia
 5. Mecklenburg
 6. Pomerania
 7. Prussian Saxony
 8. Saxony
 9. Upper Silesia
 10. West Prussia



43. The Osimo Treaty was signed by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, Miloš Minić (left) and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mariano Rumor (right) in Osimo, province of Ancona. (10 November 1975)



44. Current geopolitical situation of the city of Trieste and its vicinity.



45. Repartition of the Trieste Free Territory Zone between Italy (Zone A) and Yugoslavia (Zone B) according to the Treaty of Osimo.



46.



Ambassador Evarist Saliba of Malta

I should maybe start by summing up what was going on in Malta in the early 1970s and mention Dom Mintoff's coming to power in 1971.¹ At that time, Malta had been independent for only a few years and it had a Government that was inclined to follow the policies of the Western democracies. When Mintoff was elected in 1971, he wanted to change this trend for a number of reasons. Firstly, he pointed out that the country's British base was being used by NATO "on the cheap" without NATO even guaranteeing Malta's security in return, and secondly, Mintoff did not really have anyone in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that he had personally appointed, so he felt a little bit uneasy and thought that by introducing a new direction he would be providing the island with its own foreign policy, which in his view it had been lacking until then.

In 1969, I had been appointed Malta's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva and it just happened that in 1972 there was a dispute in which the German Democratic Republic wanted to become a member of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)², even though the Federal Republic of

¹ Dom Mintoff was Prime Minister of Malta from 1955 to 1958, when Malta was still a British colony, and again, following independence, from 1971 to 1984. Traditionally allied with Western Europe, Malta proclaimed itself non-aligned after Mintoff returned to power in 1971. An Oxford-educated socialist, Mintoff distanced Malta from Britain and

the West, refusing to allow NATO to renew base leases and granting Soviet ships use of refueling facilities built by NATO.

² The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe was set up in 1947 to promote pan-European economic integration.

Germany was already a member. The other Western countries opposed this proposal. Malta had always supported the position of West Germany, which was considered to be a great ally of Malta, so when this request came along, I contacted the Foreign Ministry, saying: "East Germany has made this request, but since we have always supported the Federal Republic on this matter, should we not also refuse?" Mintoff was in Rome at the time, conducting very, very acrimonious discussions with Britain and NATO over their military facilities in Malta, and so when the answer came back via Rome, it took me aback. I was told: "No, no, no, we are going to support the request by East Germany, which is perfectly valid."

This put me in a very awkward situation. I had to be diplomatic in my answer to the Chairman of the Western caucus, and so I told him: "I have conveyed your views to Malta, but so far I have not received any clear instructions and this is worrying me. Please bear this in mind and don't take anything for granted as far as Malta is concerned." I had tried to sound non-committal, but even so, the underlying sense of my words was perfectly well understood and within a half an hour the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany was in my office making it very clear that if Malta was to support East Germany's request, that would be looked upon as an unfriendly act – which was exactly what I had foreseen.

So I phoned our people in Rome again to tell them what the situation was. I could sense some confusion on their side and I was bold enough to tell them: "Look, I have done my part; from now on, I will not take any more steps until I'm convinced that you know what this situation involves."

The result was that, no sooner was Mintoff back in Malta, than he sent for me and asked me to explain my position on this East German issue. Everyone expected that he would shout at me, as he did with practically everybody, but the meeting proceeded very, very well. When I came out of Mintoff's office, the Chief of Staff at the Foreign Ministry told me: "I have never seen such a quiet meeting before." Mintoff realized that I knew what I was talking about and he accepted my point of view. He told me: "All right, your arguments are acceptable, you may carry on, but make sure to keep me informed; I want to know what is happening."

In due course, the GDR was admitted to the UNECE and I subsequently interacted with Mintoff on a few other occasions, so when the question of taking part in the CSCE consultations arose, he appointed me spontaneously, as I must have been an obvious choice. Not only was I already dealing with international problems at the United Nations, but I had been involved in the question of the two German States and had taken a wise position. To make a long story short, Mintoff told me to go to Dipoli in the summer of 1972, and that is how I became involved with the CSCE.

And how did Malta, as a European sovereign State, get involved in the CSCE process?

Well the CSCE was certainly not on Malta's radar until about two weeks before the talks began in Dipoli. I have reason to believe that the Italian Foreign Ministry sent Ambassador Luigi Ferraris to Malta to tell Mintoff that the talks were going to take place and that Italy would like Malta to participate. The reasons for Italy's interest in

making sure that Malta would take part in this gathering lay above all in the fact that, during World War II, Malta had been a thorn in their side, so they wanted us to be in this along with them. They knew we were not NATO members and they were also well aware that Mintoff had chucked out the local NATO commander, Admiral Birindelli³, who happens to be Italian and had his own opinion about Mintoff's political ideas. And there was another issue: Italy needed a party to support the request that Italian be made an official language of the conference.

Having been persuaded, Mintoff just picked up the telephone and asked me whether I knew about the talks. I said: "No" and he retorted: "Well, this Ferraris chap who came to see me will be in Geneva next week, so see to it that you meet him. The Swiss Government has said that they are willing to send someone along to fill you in on the background. So you just go ahead now, it's your show ... You represent Malta."

The briefing instructions I received from Mintoff before I left amounted to one sentence: "You will go to Dipoli, but don't you forget – for Malta, security in Europe means nothing unless it also involves security in the Mediterranean." And with that, my mission for the conference was set.

Does this mean that you were first briefed about the Dipoli talks in the summer of 1972 at the United Nations in Geneva and after that you travelled to Dipoli?

As agreed with Mintoff, I met with Ferraris in Geneva. He gave me his point of view on this upcoming prospect and then I met Edouard Brunner⁴, who was to become a leading figure in the Swiss delegation throughout the CSCE process. Brunner and I had a very good session all morning long, and he really gave me all the background I would need for the Dipoli consultations. We established a relationship that was to last. Later on, after I became head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Malta and he became the head of the Foreign Ministry in Bern, we remained related professionally, although we kept in contact as friends as well.

The preparatory talks in Dipoli took longer than anticipated, so it was not until the summer of 1973 that it became clear what the main lines of the *Final Act* would be and that the first phase would take place at the level of foreign ministers. That is when Mintoff came to Helsinki to address the conference as Foreign Minister of Malta.

So you were still in Geneva at the time the second stage started, but you didn't remain until the end, is that right?

When the second stage started in Geneva, I was to take up a new appointment in Libya, but before I did so, I had to hand over to the new head of the Maltese

3 Admiral Gino Birindelli served as NATO's NAVSOUTH commander, based in Malta, until Dom Mintoff declared him *persona non grata* after the Labour Party was elected to government in 1971. During the election, Admiral Birindelli had accused Mintoff of planning to let the Russians use

Malta as a naval base, adding that if the Labour Party won the election, Malta would lose its freedom.

4 See the interview with Ambassador Edouard Brunner in chapter IV.

delegation, who was at the time also our Ambassador to Italy⁵. Again, the Geneva proceedings dragged on for such a long time that this ambassador, originally posted in Rome, ended up by saying: “Look, I cannot be in Rome and Geneva at the same time and attend to everything that needs to be taken care of”, so he withdrew and the task to represent Malta fell to Victor Gauci.

Ambassador Gauci remained the Permanent Representative until the very end, right up until Mintoff sent Attard Kingswell over to Geneva for the final push. So, while I was no longer involved in the negotiations at that time, I maintained an interest in the proceedings. It was not until 1977 and then again in 1980 that I came back for the Belgrade and Madrid Follow-up Meetings.

At the opening plenary session of the first stage in Helsinki, Prime Minister Mintoff made a powerful statement,⁶ using the same words he did in the briefing instructions with which he sent you off to Dipoli in 1972: “Security in Europe means nothing unless it also includes security in the Mediterranean.” Was this to become Malta’s motto throughout the entire process?

Well, let’s face it, that did make sense. We had been through World War II ourselves and we knew that we had suffered in the Mediterranean because of a conflict that had started in Europe, and with which Malta had had nothing to do, but in which we nevertheless became entangled.

And there was more to it. At that time, the commander of the United States Sixth Fleet, which was based in Naples, had made a formal statement in which he said: “The point of confrontation between the East and the West is shifting southwards from Germany into the Mediterranean.” The reason why he said this was that the Soviet Union was preparing to build a deep-water navy. And this navy would be a challenge to what the Americans and NATO had in the Mediterranean. You see, the only way for this Soviet fleet to get from the Black Sea to the Atlantic was to pass through the Mediterranean. This entailed the risk of a potential confrontation, given that the Soviet Union wanted to establish a base in the Mediterranean; in fact, they managed to do so in Syria, and the base is still in existence today, by the way.

Anyway, the Soviet Union was trying to get closer to Libya for this very purpose at the time, and Mintoff had already established friendly relations with the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi. So there was this danger, and therefore, in a way, Mintoff’s idea to use this position in the negotiations was plausible.

In any case, I tried to advance the notion of including a reference to the Mediterranean in the agenda for the second stage, and I remember that, in the first statement I made

⁵ Quite apart from his appointment in Rome and with the CSCE in Geneva, Ambassador C. J. Mallia also frequently replaced Prime Minister Dom Mintoff as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Malta to the Council of Europe, and attended most of the Council’s Committee of Ministers meetings held in Strasbourg between 1971 and 1975.

⁶ This statement can be found in the verbatim records of the 7th session of the opening plenary meeting of the CSCE, first stage (CSCE/I/PV.7), Helsinki, 6 July 1973.

in plenary, sometime in mid-December, I briefly noted: “Malta has only one frontier and that is with the Mediterranean Sea, and this must be borne in mind during our negotiations.”

Then, Mintoff asked me to come back to Malta during the Christmas holidays and he briefed me in greater detail. I’m afraid that some of his ideas were far-fetched, and I believed that there was absolutely no chance of them being accepted. For example, he would say: “Whatever they are going to decide in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks (MBFRs) in Vienna, I want these measures to be equally applicable in the Mediterranean.”

I mean, we were not even participants in those particular talks, so what right had we to say: “If you are reducing forces on land, you have to do the same in the waters of the Mediterranean”? He wanted the Mediterranean to be free of nuclear weapons. But how could you tell another Mediterranean country, like France for instance: “You must completely change your defence system, because from now on you cannot use nuclear weapons?” How could you persuade the United States and Britain or the Soviet Union, for that matter, to promise that their ships in the Mediterranean were not and would not be carrying nuclear weapons?

Was there not also an issue regarding the participation of some specific Mediterranean States?

This was another of Mintoff’s initiatives indeed. He wanted the Arab countries of the Mediterranean to participate in the Conference, but he specifically excluded Israel. Of course, this put those countries which had diplomatic relations with Israel in a very uncomfortable position. When Mintoff spoke of “participating”, it didn’t yet have the meaning it was later given in the “Blue Book”. There you will find the exact definition of what the verb “to participate” implied – the right to be present at all the proceedings; to speak on any subject on the agenda; to make your own proposals and to make your financial contributions; but most importantly, to give or withhold consensus.

Eventually, we had to formulate this initiative in a formal proposal, the wording of which was along the following lines: “The Arab Mediterranean countries (i.e., excluding Israel) will participate in the CSCE. There will be no restrictions on the issues they may speak of and they will not be limited to taking the floor exclusively on questions regarding security in the Mediterranean.” It even implied that they could make statements on issues pertaining to the frontiers between East and West Germany and that, by becoming participating States in the Conference they were to have the same rights to grant or withhold their voices in the consensus-building process.

It was certainly far from being easy to follow Mintoff’s instructions. The first thing I had to do was to understand what he really meant and how I could convey his thoughts in other terms than in the crude expressions he used when he spoke to me.

To come back to this proposal to involve the Mediterranean States in the CSCE – I had to be very careful how I then formulated this. I succeeded until there was a formal proposal in black and white. Once it reached that stage, I couldn’t change it. I had offered Malta many options for the way in which this question of Arab countries could

be tackled and had made it clear from the beginning that Israel could not be excluded. I told my Ministry they did not need to mention any names, and that therefore, there would be no need to exclude any names either. I gave five alternatives. Mintoff did not accept any of them.

What became of this draft proposal?

Well, as mentioned before, there was no earthly chance that such a proposal could be accepted in Dipoli. Therefore, the idea of including the Mediterranean in the agenda of the Geneva stage gained ground only very slowly. The first countries to speak in favour of mentioning the Mediterranean were, strangely, Switzerland⁷ and Austria⁸ - two neutral, landlocked countries at the very centre of Europe. After some time, even the United States joined in.

Now, the United States had a very clever chief negotiator by the name of George Vest⁹, from the State Department. He looked very much like John Wayne. I remember one day after a meeting, he gave me a lift to our hotel. I used that time to explain what Malta was really aiming at. I even remember the phrase I used to reassure him of my intentions. I said: "Don't be afraid – Malta will not be a Trojan horse for the Arab States." And I believed it because I didn't imagine that Mintoff would raise the Israeli-Palestinian issue as one which should concern or could be discussed within the CSCE.

After the Easter break in 1973, I ran into George Vest at the conference premises in between meetings and he took me aside to confide: "Ambassador Saliba, you have convinced me and I, in turn, have convinced the State Department. Please, let there be no funny business." Fortunately enough, I did not thank him for his trust, as unexpected things did later happen and Malta ended up by submitting the proposal we were speaking of earlier for the Arab Mediterranean States to participate in the Conference.¹⁰

This was towards the end of the preparatory talks in Dipoli?

Yes, this was in Dipoli, during the break of March – April 1973. So when I was instructed to put forward this proposal, absolutely nobody, but nobody, was in favour of it, not even Yugoslavia or Cyprus – because by that time, the term "participating State" had been given a very specific meaning.

7 In point b) of the Swiss proposal (HC/10), dated 12 December 1973, Switzerland suggested that the agenda for the Conference include a "special" placeholder to deal with political questions, including possible institutional consequences of the Conference and the problem in the Mediterranean.

8 In point 4 of the Austrian proposal (HC/20), regarding the agenda for the CSCE, dated 17 January 1973, the delegation proposed that the CSCE could contribute to détente in the Middle East.

9 George Southall Vest was a United States Department of State official who was posted to Brussels as Deputy Chief of

the US Mission to NATO from 1969 to 1972. He attended the Dipoli Consultations and the first stage of the CSCE in his function as US Representative for European Affairs.

10 On 29 May 1973, Malta submitted a drafting proposal (HC/41) in the working group dealing with the composition of [or participation in] the Conference that suggested amending the text submitted by Hungary (HC/7) on 11 December 1972 by introducing the phrase "and the Arab States bordering the Mediterranean" after "... All European States, The United States of America, Canada"[...].

The most serious attack against the proposal came from the Ambassador of Spain, which at this time was still ruled by Franco. He told the conference participants: “Look, Spain has diplomatic relations and embassies in all the Arab countries bordering on the Mediterranean. We don’t have one in Israel. And we know from our contacts that none of these countries is interested in being a CSCE participating State. So why are you even raising the issue?”

But in diplomacy there is always some sort of – well, some would call it “double-dealing”. The Spanish Ambassador was right to raise the issue, but at the same time Algeria and Tunisia were sending their diplomats to Helsinki allegedly to gather information about the Conference. But the truth of the matter is that these diplomats were playing a double game. On the one hand, they would speak to the Western countries, saying: “We are here because we are interested in what is going on, we just came to see how things are coming along.” But when they talked to me, they adopted a different tone. One of them told me: “You should give it to them, let them know we won’t be looked down upon.” I could hardly tell the conference: “Look here, this is what they are really saying to me ...”

Malta had enjoyed a number of successes at this point in the Dipoli consultations. A reference to the Mediterranean was made in the first basket regarding politico-military security and confidence-building measures. Further reference to the Mediterranean was also made in the second basket with respect to economic cooperation. I did not attempt to press for the Mediterranean to be mentioned in the third basket, because, strangely enough, Malta was not interested in this, so I was told not to take any initiative in that sense. Regardless of this, though, all that I mentioned earlier was enshrined in the “Blue Book” and later adopted at the first and second stages of the Conference.

As for the proposal for the Arab countries to participate fully in the Conference, I knew all along that there was not the slightest chance for it to be accepted. And as I was bound to defend the proposal, I was in a precarious position, because the issue really became a core problem that kept the proceedings in Dipoli dragging on longer than they should have.

A number of your ex-colleagues who were in Dipoli [and who took part in this project], mentioned that Malta had been especially difficult at the conclusion of the preparatory talks and that a lot of pressure had to be exerted on your delegation for consensus to finally be reached on the very last day. How did all of this look from your side of the “barricades”?

Well, yes – this in fact became known as the “Siege of Evarist”, because at Dipoli I really was besieged and had to fight back hard to defend our position. As I said, nobody in the plenary hall could really accept the proposal to extend an invitation to the Arab countries. I remember well a vicious attack by the head of the Soviet delegation, Lev Mendelevich. To be fair to him, I must point out that he did come to me before he spoke and told me he would be very cruel, but that I should not take it personally. He simply said he was obliged to say what he had to say. And it was a very strong statement. He said: “Here is a war-torn Europe, finally coming to the point of agreement, and here *you* are, one small country, attempting to bring this process to a halt? How dare you?”

Luckily, his forewarning helped. I told him: “It is far from our intention to want to hinder the process. We have been through war, just like you. I practically starved in Malta and many of my schoolmates are no longer alive.” And I continued: “I understand that you are looking at the issue of security from your own point of view and you are right to do so. We are seeing it from the perspective of an island in the Mediterranean, so please try to understand our position.”

And how did this war of words actually end?

The siege ended, not because of any threats and retractions, but thanks to an intervention by Romania. Unbeknown to me, the Romanian Government sent a very high official (I understand it was the Deputy Prime Minister) to Malta to meet Mintoff and persuade him to allow the consensus.

Why Romania? I think that it was because Romania identified with Malta. Everyone had expected that Mintoff – once he closed down the NATO headquarters – would move closer to Moscow. But no, he made overtures to China. Romania, in the meantime, had broken with Moscow to a certain extent (even though it was still a member of the Warsaw Pact) and had established relations with China too. So, at that time, there were three countries in Europe: Albania (which had refused to participate in the CSCE), Romania and Malta, which were not NATO countries and had nothing to do with the West, but which didn’t want to be linked militarily with the Warsaw Pact countries either. They were “outsiders” and acted more or less independently.

The CSCE was not supposed to function on a *bloc-versus-bloc* basis. In actual practice, of course, the two sides did confer among themselves and coordinated their respective positions; however, Romania always made it a point to speak independently. The differences between the viewpoint of Romania and that of the rest of the East may have been small, but Romania nevertheless wanted to show that it was not part of the satellite system of the USSR.

Hence, the Romanians felt that they could intervene. For his part, Mintoff – and this is conjecture on my part, but I knew him – having had the satisfaction of someone coming over to Malta to talk to him, felt that he could now give in. So an agreement was finally reached on the wording of the reference to the Mediterranean in the “Blue Book”¹¹, which had its repercussions during the subsequent stages.

So is that how you were finally relieved from the siege?

It would have come as a relief, but I didn’t know anything about it! Back in Dipoli, when everyone arrived for the scheduled final day, I remember that I did sense that people were relaxed and nobody seemed to be too anxious about the prospect of failure, because, as I was to find out later on, the Romanians had told them that the solution

¹¹ Paragraph 15 of part I, chapter 2, of the Helsinki Final Recommendations states: “In considering questions relating to security in Europe, the Committee will bear in mind the

broader context of world security and in particular the relationship which exists between security in Europe and in the Mediterranean area”.

– the formula – had already been worked out behind the scenes in Valletta. So I was the only one worried, because I was the only one who hadn’t heard about this behind-the-scenes settlement.

At a certain point, the Chairman asked for a coffee break – a longish coffee break, because they knew that I was due to receive instructions from Malta. During the coffee break, the Finnish Executive Secretary told me: “Mr. Saliba, could you please keep yourself on hand because we have been told that there might be a telephone call from Malta.”

At the time, of course, there were no mobile phones, so the call had to come through telephone exchanges in Malta and Finland and various points in between. So when, during this coffee break, a telephone operator came to me and told me that I had a call from Malta, I hurried to the telephone booths. These were U-formed cubicles with a curtain to preserve privacy – a short curtain that hung about one or two feet above the floor. The telephone operator told me: “You may take your call in this booth.” So I went in, but somehow I could not get through. Accordingly, I went out and told her: “I’m afraid I cannot get my connection.” So she came in with me and started talking to the operator.

What I did not know at that point was that the Finnish Chairman (who told me about this years later), having lost sight of me, had become a little panicky when he didn’t see me and so he hurried to the telephone section to see whether I was there. And sure enough, he saw under this curtain a pair of male legs next to the legs of a lady. He didn’t know what to do. On the one hand, he felt that it was not his business and he should leave whoever was in there in peace, but as an officer of the CSCE, he wanted to make sure that this telephone call had got through to me, so he drew back the curtain. It took us a little bit by surprise, but immediately there was a conversation between him and the Finnish telephone operator, who put his mind at rest by assuring him that she was simply ensuring that I was properly connected.

Anyway, when I did get through, it was indeed Mintoff on the phone and he told me: ‘*L’Assedio di Evaristo*’ is over. You may now join the consensus, Evarist.”

I could hardly believe it.

It took some time for the notion and the meaning of “participating State” to sink in – not “member State” but “participating State”. Was there any talk in Dipoli about agreeing on some kind of observer status, meaning that certain States would have no decision-making powers, but could nevertheless attend the Conference – like the Partners for Co-operation¹² today?

Well, it was mentioned, yes – I mean, the general idea was that if we were going to include a Mediterranean dimension, then such countries should be present only at

12 The OSCE maintains special relations with the following Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. Beginning in the early 1990s, formal relations were also initiated with the following Asian Partners for Co-operation: Japan, the Republic of

Korea, Thailand and Afghanistan. In 2009, Australia was granted the status of Partner for Co-operation and invited to participate in the meetings of the Contact Group with the Asian Partners.

those meetings where questions concerning the Mediterranean were being discussed. But if, for example, confidence-building measures or the number of tanks and aircraft in mainland Europe were to be discussed, then the feeling was that no outsider country should be involved. So “observer” was putting it too strongly. It was finally a Yugoslav suggestion that was retained, and it basically said that non-participating Mediterranean States should be invited to address the Conference if they showed any interest in doing so. In other words, a country would declare its interest, and then we would tell them: “Yes, please, you may join us now.”

In terms of actual implementation, it did present some difficulties because it meant that the country would come, the ambassador would make a speech, and then he’d leave. He wouldn’t even hear what the reactions were. I must say, though, that over the years, as we gained more experience, such practices relaxed to a large extent.

At the Meeting on the Mediterranean in September 1990 in Palma de Mallorca,¹³ we had the Mediterranean States sitting there all the time. Nobody objected to their presence and they made remarks on what the European countries were saying and the European countries answered them; and Israel sat next to Egypt. So, the initial stiffness started to ease, to loosen up; but that was much, much later.

Could you sum up Mintoff’s prevailing areas of concern regarding the Mediterranean during the formative years of the CSCE?

If you read the speeches that Mintoff made, he made it quite clear that he didn’t want either the United States fleet or the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean. He spoke about the Middle East conflict quite openly. And during the course of the third phase of the CSCE process, Malta’s representation went even further in this direction.

In Mintoff’s view, the Mediterranean extended *de facto* right to the Arabian Gulf, for he included many more Arab States that were far away from Europe, such as Iran, which of course is not looked upon as an Arab State. A number of diplomats took note of this, but some even took it quite seriously.

So seriously that when the CSCE assembled for the Second Follow-up Meeting in Madrid and I had been appointed to represent Malta, I had the Iraqi ambassador wanting to come and see me within the first week of the Meeting. He sent his Chief of Staff (or maybe he was a Counsellor), who came to me with gifts of alcoholic drinks. I didn’t know what on earth it was all about. In the end, he confessed: “My Ambassador has a message from our President for you to convey to your Prime Minister Mintoff. He would be most obliged if Malta would not mention the Iran-Iraq war¹⁴ during the conference in Madrid.” I asked myself why he should ask me this. The reason was simple: Mintoff had insisted during the previous sessions on the fact that security in the Mediterranean should be seen within these extended parameters.

¹³ The Palma de Mallorca Meeting took place from 24 September to 19 October 1990. It focused on certain environmental aspects of cooperation and the protection of the Mediterranean ecosystems.

¹⁴ The Iran-Iraq war lasted from September 1980 to August 1988.

And I should also add that Mintoff always liked to extend the borders of Europe as a way of making people pay attention. One image he used portrayed the superpowers as smiling at each other in Central Europe while baring their ugly teeth at each other on the blue Mediterranean. And this of course did make people sit up and take notice.

One had to be careful when using certain words or turns of phrase. When taking instructions from Mintoff, the first thing I had to do was to understand what he really meant and then think of ways to convey it in other terms than in the crude expressions he used when he spoke to me. I had to be extremely cautious about how I then formulated it, as it had to reflect his instruction and at the same time address the participants. I had to succeed in this by the time a formal proposal was tabled. Once it reached that stage, it could no longer be changed, it just remained to be defended.

If one considers the interpretative statements and reservations made by the Cypriot¹⁵ and Turkish¹⁶ delegations before, during and after the events in Cyprus in July 1974, do you think this particular situation was something the CSCE could have resolved or prevented from happening?

Well, I think this interpretation might require a slight nuance. One should not only look at the formal proposals or statements that were tabled in the name of this State or that State; one should also know what was actually being said at the meetings.

When the *Final Act* was being signed in 1975, there was still one State whose borders were being violated, and that State was Cyprus. It is a fact that the Conference did nothing about this. They knew very well that they couldn't solve the problem. They simply hoped for a desirable outcome and left it in the hands of the United Nations and in the hands of Britain, Turkey and Greece. Events proved that the Conference was not equipped to intervene or establish peacekeeping forces. It was primarily a forum in which people negotiated and tried to reach solutions through consensus. And consensus means that both sides have to make a concession. Unfortunately, this was not possible in the case of Cyprus.

And what was Malta's outlook on the conflict in the Middle East at the time?

One must not forget that, at that stage and during those years, the armed dispute in the Middle East over Israel and Palestine hogged the world's attention. Any progress towards a possible peaceful solution was stalled. While reading one of the statements that Mintoff made at the time, I noted that he claimed he saw no reason why the progress being made on the European scene – the so-called *détente* – could not also apply in the Middle East.

15 See the interpretative statement by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus relating to the adoption of the *Final Act* (CSCE/III/2), submitted on 1 August 1975.

7 July 1973 (CSCE/I/29), and another formal reservation by the Turkish Government relating to the decision to adopt the *Final Act*, submitted on the same day as the above-mentioned Cypriot statement.

16 See the interpretative note on the scope of the principle of "non-intervention in internal affairs", submitted by Turkey on

came back. In the following session, he was replaced by another ambassador. I think that Dobrosielski knew that the point had been reached where the Polish people would stand no more. He was afraid, really afraid, that there would be bloodshed. In fact, there was not. All right, there were individual victims, but there wasn't a war.

If we make a giant leap forward in time, when the CSCE came to fruition, Czechoslovakia split into two parts peacefully and in full compliance with the CSCE principles²¹. That was a perfectly well executed peaceful settlement of something that didn't even become a dispute. The two countries' borders and integrity were not violated by any outsider. It was something that the people of the country decided on their own. For reasons of their own, they decided that they wanted to be two nations, rather than one. If this was a good example, I think Yugoslavia, unfortunately, was quite the contrary.

I felt that I knew Yugoslavia quite well. I had been there for meetings of non-aligned nations and for the CSCE Follow-up Meeting in Belgrade. And one thing that impressed me during those days was that, when you went to the Kamalagadan park in Belgrade, overlooking the confluence of the Danube and the Sava rivers, during the weekend, you would find members of all the different ethnic groups of Yugoslavia dancing and playing their music, and everyone appreciated what all those different people had to offer. And yet, I'm afraid the whole thing collapsed, starting with Slovenia. That could have been done quietly, but the other components of what Yugoslavia was centuries ago and what happened turned out to be two different stories.

In the book *The Bridge over the River Drina*²², by Ivo Andrić, I was struck by his description of what had happened in Yugoslavia so very recently; the same places are mentioned for the same bloody reasons. Now, the CSCE was there and observed most of it. Some of its guiding principles were being violated and the CSCE did not have the power either to prevent it or to control it once the war had erupted.

In one way, this is where the OSCE is better placed today, because the OSCE is a partner organization to the United Nations, under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter²³. The Charter recognizes that there is a role for regional organizations in other than military terms. And one cannot look to the OSCE to provide a solution of a military nature. I think that is something of great value. There still has to be a dialogue in which the intervention of this entity – the OSCE – which is not identified with any single nation, but with a group of nations, can propose solutions, and can ensure that human rights are being respected.

21 The dissolution of the federal State of Czechoslovakia took effect on 1 January 1993, further to the self-determined separation of its two constituent States, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

22 First published in 1945, the English cover mentions the following quote: "A great stone bridge built three centuries ago in the heart of the Balkans [...] stands witness to the countless lives played out upon it and to the sufferings of the people of Bosnia."

23 Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations reads in part: "[...]Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action [...] The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies [...]"

Do you think the CSCE/OSCE model could be applicable or of some support in the present-day situation of your neighbours on the Southern and Eastern banks of the Mediterranean?

As a matter of fact, a “5+5” meeting took place in Malta just recently²⁴. This gathering is a kind of spin-off from the CSCE idea: The 5+5, or Western European Dialogue,²⁵ to give it its proper title, brings together five EU member States: Malta, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal. Five North African countries were represented: Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania. Only countries from the Western side of the Mediterranean are included, so as to avoid any potential problems related also to Palestine and Israel, but even so, one of the problems the Dialogue addresses – illegal immigration – relates to the Eastern Mediterranean. Many of the illegal migrants are from the Eastern Mediterranean; some of them come from as far away as the Horn of Africa.

Looking back on your experience with the CSCE and taking into consideration what was going on in Europe in 1989, would you say the Conference was instrumental in bringing down the Berlin Wall?

By way of an answer, I would like to recount this personal experience. It was during the multilateral preparatory talks in Dipoli; it was a time when nothing was really happening, and I was in the communications centre, sending my usual report over to Malta. There was a journalist from West Germany there – I think he was from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. And he asked me: “Do you think that anything will come out of this?” I told him: “Yes, I do. The ultimate aim is for East Germany and West Germany to be reunited.”

He replied: “What? That would mean World War III. What do you mean?” I said: “Look, the way I see this confrontation finishing is by Germany becoming one country. The greatest confrontation between the West and the East is exactly on the border of the two German States. Elsewhere, between the East and the West, you have the neutral countries – Sweden and Finland in the north, Austria and Switzerland further down, and Yugoslavia on the Mediterranean. So the confrontation is in Germany. Therefore, when and if the two German States unite as a neutral country – when the confrontation there comes to an end – then things will become much easier.”

Well, unification did come about, but not because they suddenly decided: “Let’s just do it.” It came about because of what the CSCE had started. You see, the CSCE sowed the seeds. People got to know each other well enough that it changed their attitudes, and one State after the other started to change – the old regimes started to collapse into democratic ones, until this reached East Germany as well.

²⁴ This event took place in Valletta on 5 and 6 October 2012.

²⁵ The Western European Dialogue acts as a framework for communication and cooperation amongst member countries in tackling such issues as security and stability,

economic integration and regional migration. This regional grouping was first proposed by France in the 1980s, and it met for the first time at the level of foreign ministers in Rome in October 1990.

I was very lucky to be in Berlin just a few days before the Berlin Wall came down, because the then Prime Minister of Malta, Eddie Fenech Adami, was on an official visit to Germany. At that time in our Government, the Prime Minister was also Minister of Foreign Affairs, so I accompanied him on this visit as a personal adviser on foreign relations. We were in Bonn and while we were visiting German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, he suddenly asked us: “Would you like to go out to Berlin and see what’s up? The Wall is about to fall.” So we agreed and went over.

I feel privileged to this day to have been there at that time. I was right at the Wall, and actually took a few steps into East Germany. The Wall was bleak concrete on the eastern side, but people were swinging their pickaxes at the colourful graffiti-covered western face. It was something really electrifying, something which nobody thought they would ever see. I mean, even I had never foreseen the unification of Germany coming about like that.



The interview with Ambassador Saliba was conducted in English during two sessions on the premises of the Prague Office, on 8 and 9 October 2012, by Alice Němcová.



47. Oil-tanker SS Ohio on the verge of sinking in Valletta's Big Harbour in August 1942 after it accomplished its refueling mission in British led "operation pedestal".

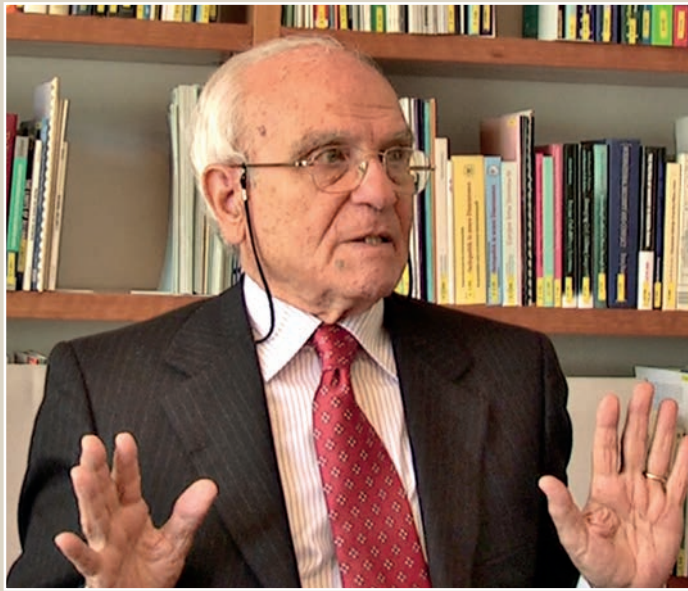
Evarist Saliba

Evarist V. Saliba was born in Malta in 1928. He started teaching in State primary schools in 1947, eventually graduating from the Royal University of Malta with the degree of Bachelor of Education and becoming head teacher of one of the biggest schools in Malta. After being a council member of the Malta Union of Teachers, he became its President in 1962. He pursued further studies at St. Mary's Training College in Twickenham and at the University of Birmingham, in England.

When Malta became independent in 1964, he joined its foreign service. After a course of studies at the University of Oxford and the Board of Trade in London, he served as Malta's representative in Tripoli, Libya, then governed by King Idris, until 1969. From that year until 1973, he acted as Malta's Permanent Representative to the European Office of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in Geneva.

Ambassador Saliba represented Malta at the CSCE consultations in Dipoli for their entire duration, and turned his responsibilities over to his successor, C. J. Mallia, at the beginning of the second stage in Geneva, then returned to his appointment in Libya in late 1973. By that time, the country was under the rule of Colonel Gaddafi.

He returned to the CSCE as head of the Maltese delegation at the Follow-up Meetings in Belgrade, Madrid, Stockholm and Vienna. He attended the CSCE Meetings of Experts on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in Montreux, the Seminar on Economic, Scientific and Cultural Co-operation



in the Mediterranean that took place in Venice, the Meeting on the Mediterranean held in Palma de Mallorca, the Symposium on the Cultural Heritage of the CSCE Participating States in Krakow and the Seminar of Experts on Democratic Institutions in Oslo, as well as all the CSCE events held in Malta.

He also served as Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Valletta and as an adviser to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Saliba represented Malta in many international conferences: The UN Conference on Trade and Development, the Non-Aligned Movement meetings, meetings of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, as well as meetings of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in New York, Geneva and other venues.

Between 1984 and 1992, he occupied various positions at the level of Adviser to the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 1992, he went on to hold ambassadorial posts in Beijing, Pyongyang, Madrid, Andorra, Athens and Nicosia, before his retirement in 2003.

In 2007, Mr. Saliba published his memoirs, “*No Honourable Minister – Memoirs of a Senior Maltese Diplomat*”²⁶.

He has written extensively on the subject of international relations and has contributed numerous articles on foreign policy to the Maltese media.

²⁶ Published by Book Distributor Limited (BDL) in San Ġwan, Malta, 2007.



48. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta, Dom Mintoff at the first stage of the CSCE. Helsinki. (July 1973)



49. Attard Kingswell was sent to the Geneva negotiations in June 1975 to support the Maltese cause.



50. Members of the Maltese delegation during the Helsinki Ministerial Meeting (left to right): Prime Minister Dom Mintoff, ambassador Evarist Saliba, the Prime Minister's private secretary Mr. Joe Camilleri, Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs ambassador Maurice Abela and Consul of Malta appointed to Finland Mr. Eric Winkkeman. (July 1973)



51. The delegation of Malta to the CSCE in Geneva (left to right): Ms. Maria Cilia, Victor Gauci (permanent delegate), ambassador Carmel Mallia (Head of delegation) and ambassador Evarist Saliba (Chargé d'affaire in Libya). (September 1973)



52.



Ambassador Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin of the Soviet Union

In the early hours of 22 July 1975, as chairman of the closing plenary meeting of the second stage of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Geneva, it was I who made it known by the bang of my gavel that we had reached consensus on the draft of the *Final Act*, which was thereby complete, and actually approved. From that moment on, it would be transmitted to be signed by the leaders of the participating States a month later in Helsinki.

And, if we're to talk about my involvement in the preparations and then the process of the Conference, I must mention that, many years before, in the mid-1960s, I was also present at the first clarion call for holding this pan-European Conference. But maybe I should go through all of this in chronological order, as I understand that you would like me to speak of the CSCE, as it was called in those years, from the perspective of the Soviet Union and perhaps put this pan-European conference into the context of its time.

I should then start by saying that, since the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union had cast its choice in favour of overcoming the apprehension plaguing international affairs in those years. Tensions were indeed running very high, owing to a number of issues:

the ongoing war in Vietnam, the unresolved status of post-war situations in Europe and consequently the complicated relations among European countries, as well as the absence of a solution to problems related to nuclear weapons, etc. So this Conference was obviously a child of the policy of *détente*. I believe it was one of the most significant events during this era, and it should be noted that it was both initiated and actively promoted by the Soviet Union starting in the mid-1950s¹.

Would you mind telling us more about that first “clarion call” for holding the Conference in the 1960s?

When we started to pursue the policy of *détente* in the mid-1960s, our leaders had major goals in mind. If we're talking in terms of scale and dimension, what we had in mind was ultimately to overcome the Cold War.

We initiated this process primarily through bilateral relations with individual Western countries. For many reasons that I will not enumerate here, France enjoyed a special status² with the Soviet Union, so it was in Paris that we began to network a series of contacts with a view to pursuing this policy. It was fairly clear that the French were going to be responsive to this kind of approach. In other words, we assumed (and the Soviet leadership assumed as well) that this idea would catch on. So the idea gradually took hold in the two capitals that this work was to start with an exchange of visits by the respective Foreign Ministers.

Never before had the history of relations between our two countries seen so many of this kind of reciprocal visits by the French and Soviet Foreign Ministers. At that time, in 1965, to be precise, I was working as a Counsellor at the Soviet Embassy in Paris, and I enjoyed quite extensive contacts with senior officials at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I was the person the French had selected as their interlocutor on these matters, and this sign of trust in bilateral relations made for a good exchange of views and fluid communication. So this is how I was told that the time had come to speak about this initiative [of holding a pan-European conference] and that they [the French] wanted me to send this signal to Moscow. As a gesture of reciprocity, they suggested that they would like the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Gromyko³, to come and visit France first to discuss these matters himself.

Foreign Minister Gromyko arrived in Paris in 1965, and talks were held in an extremely cordial atmosphere. Generally speaking, there were grounds for supposing that, even if

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¹ This Soviet initiative relates to a proposal made during the 1954 Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers (USSR, USA, France and the United Kingdom) by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, who proposed a pan-European collective security treaty as an alternative to Western plans for a European defence community.

² In chapter III, Ambassador Jacques Andréani is specifically asked to expand on the French-Soviet relations in those years, as seen from the French perspective.

³ Andrey Andreyevich Gromyko (1909–1989), served as Soviet Foreign Minister from 1957 to 1985 and was then President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (1985–1988). Although he never strongly identified with any particular policy or political faction, he served dependably as a skilled emissary and spokesman. He frequently accompanied Soviet leaders, including Nikita S. Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, and Aleksey Kosygin, on visits to foreign leaders. He became a member of the Politburo in 1973 and was named First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1983.

these relations were just taking shape, we would be able to turn this newfound Soviet-French understanding into a dynamic factor in international relations, which would in turn contribute to a positive evolution of the situation in Europe.

This was the view of almost everyone at the Soviet Embassy, but the next question was how to turn this understanding into real diplomatic action. As Gromyko's repeated negotiations with the French had shown, we could not expect that there would be any progress regarding a change in the existing positions, both the West's and our own. By then, these positions had crystallized, and while it was possible to relieve some tension in the discussions surrounding our proposals and assessments, there was really no prospect of building any plans for the future on the basis of the existing relations.

However, there was an earnest desire to move forward and to change the situation in Europe on both sides, but the basic question "how?" remained unanswered. In addition to its general political significance, that question was also of great practical importance for me. You see, I was responsible for the political aspect of the bilateral relations between France and the Soviet Union at the Embassy in Paris, and so it was my job to draw up proposals for Moscow. Therefore, I needed to come up with something fresh – something that had not been the subject of controversy and could break new ground.

Such an approach was not customary for us, nor was it something that we were ready for, either at the Embassy or in Moscow. Consequently, I shared these concerns with our Ambassador in Paris, Valerian Zorin⁴, who was appointed to the post at that time, and he responded quite positively to what I told him. At the end of the conversation, he asked: "How can we solve this situation?" I told him that it would be a good idea to start looking for an answer together with the French – which would be part of our work anyhow. And how would we work together with the French?

Well, I suggested that we hold a couple of meetings – my kind of meetings, unofficial meetings, or at the very least, meetings in an unofficial setting – which must be held on an entirely non-committal basis. I was persuaded that we had a number of concerns in common and I trusted that we could reach an agreement. Furthermore, the discussions could concern some or all of the main proposals regarding European security and international affairs that had by then already started to take shape within our own foreign policy. We would of course also open the discussions to certain French ideas, especially since President de Gaulle's statements had expressed a fair number of interesting views regarding the future of Europe in those years⁵.

⁴ Valerian Aleksandrovich Zorin (1902–1986) was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1947, and during this period, he also served as Permanent Representative to the UN Security Council. Zorin left for the FRG in 1965 for a year and in 1966 he was appointed Ambassador to France, where he stayed until 1971. He was assigned to the Soviet delegation to the CSCE in Dipoli–1972 and Geneva–1973.

⁵ This reference relates to a statement made by General de Gaulle on 30 July 1966, addressed to the people of Moscow, in which he said: "We must now start to implement the easing of tensions, mutual understanding and cooperation throughout Europe so that it can earn back its own security, after so many battles, ruin and its entire continent having been torn apart". (This quote is also remembered by Mr. Jiří Opršal in chapter II).

anything about refusal either. Instead, he said: “Nobody has addressed such a question to France until now, so I’m not sure what to say.” And then, after thinking a bit more, he added: “We’ll give this question some more thought and I’ll come back to you with our answer when we meet again.” We then parted, and I was left with an answer that I could translate to my superiors as meaning “Maybe.”

Of course, the idea of convening a conference was nothing new. The Soviet Union had already proposed this in 1954.⁸ Back then, the West had given a straightforward answer without any discussion whatsoever. They claimed that it was just one more of our propagandistic moves, so that was that. More than 10 years later, it seemed to me that there was good reason for reviving the idea, given that the Soviet Union was still looking to enshrine its territorial status in Europe and thereby strengthen its position in European politics.

And when did the French finally respond to your proposal?

When I advanced the notion, no answer was forthcoming. Just as before, they didn’t say yes; they didn’t say no. Although it was clear that the idea we had put forward was in line with French policy, they resolved that the time had not yet come to take a firm position on the proposal. In any case, by 15 July 1965, it had become clear to Zorin and to me that the idea of holding a conference or a meeting on the subject of security not only looked promising but was also worth pursuing. We decided to seize on this proposal and bring it once again to Moscow’s attention. I sent a detailed transcript of my conversation with my French counterparts to Moscow, and Anatoly Kovalev⁹, who was at the time the official overseeing our relations with France, took note of it right away.

Much later, I found out that on the transcript retrieved from the archive files containing documents from that time, Kovalev had marked: “To be transmitted to the Minister for consideration”. I should explain that the way the Ministry of Foreign Affairs functioned, very seldom are reports of conversations brought to the attention of the minister in encrypted form. Cases when records of conversations by embassy counsellors received through diplomatic post are brought to the minister’s attention were indeed extremely rare. So when I was studying these records in view of the preparations for the Conference, I noticed that the minister had not only familiarized himself with the record of the conversation (when he did this kind of work he usually

⁸ (See footnote No 1), Molotov’s collective security proposal was rejected by Western representatives on two grounds: firstly, because the United States was excluded and relegated (together with Communist China) to observer status, and secondly, because it was alleged that the Soviet proposal was aimed at disrupting NATO and the European defence architecture.

⁹ Anatoly Gavrilovich Kovalev (1923–2002) graduated from MGIMO and after working several years as Head of the European Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he was appointed in 1971 to assist Andrey Gromyko, as

Deputy Foreign Minister. As such, he headed the delegation of the USSR in Dipoli 1972–1973 and Geneva 1973–1975. He held the post of Deputy Foreign Minister up until 1986 and he was then appointed Head of the planning section of the Foreign Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1991. After retirement, he remained active as an adviser in his diplomatic rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. In 1988, he authored “The ABCs of diplomacy” and as of 1977, he regularly published poems and prose as an acclaimed member of the writers’ union of Russia.

used a blue pencil), but in those places where there was a reference to a conference of European States he'd made precise notes and underlined those passages.

In a nutshell, looking back at those events, this was the beginning of it all. I wrote about this version of events many years ago. There have been no refutations or additions made. Perhaps this was indeed the very first signal, to all intents and purposes a proposal, or perhaps not, but in any case it was the signal noted by Soviet diplomatic leaders. The idea of convening a pan-European conference was undoubtedly a promising one, and it was something that we could certainly help move forward, although I wasn't directly involved in this work until I returned to Moscow in 1968.

That year, I was appointed Deputy Director of the First European Division of the Foreign Ministry, and from then on, I was more systematically engaged in the issue of a European security conference. Specifically, I was involved in putting together the first circular on this matter to our embassies in the relevant countries, setting out the idea, and then in analyzing all the replies we received in return.

During those preliminary communications were there any discussions about inviting the United States and Canada to take part in the preparation of this Conference?

The question of the participation of the United States of America or Canada was a particularly sticky one, since this initiative in general was regarded first and foremost as a European initiative by the Soviet Union as well as the other socialist countries at the time. When we were analyzing the answers and responses we had received, we noted for the first time that the US was sending out signs of interest. I was told that Kissinger picked up on it right away, and there was no rejection of any kind or any negative response on his part. What's more, many NATO countries were asking: "What about our partners, the United States? Wouldn't it be a good idea if they were present during the drafting and implementation?"

At the end of 1969, Gromyko specifically raised this issue with the Soviet leadership, and a formal decision was taken. That is also when active diplomatic efforts began – in our attempt to explain the rationale of this idea to other European countries. We were the first to take these steps, but the socialist countries followed close behind. An analysis was then carried out with a view to examining, clarifying and evaluating the different attitudes and reactions. One of the main elements that emerged clearly from this study was that the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries would have to define their stance on the participation of the United States.

The discussion and decision regarding the participation of the United States took place in November 1969. The Americans posed the question via the Department of State: "Have you considered whether the United States could take part in the Conference? And what about Canada?" they asked. The answer we gave was essentially as follows: "We, the Soviet Union, have no objections to the involvement of the United States and Canada", but we went on to add "... naturally, provided that the German Democratic Republic participates in the conference on the same basis as the Federal Republic of Germany, and that it enjoys the same rights as all other European countries." The answer was clear and of political significance. The United States agreed to this without

any reservations. I would even go so far as to say that this was a major step forward in normalizing the situation in Europe.

The fact is that, when we took up the work in a multilateral context, we also stepped up our bilateral work with France, with a view to giving the idea more practical and political content. This constituted the basic thrust of our work. Our work with France became increasingly structured, aiming at clarifying what the conference could work on, how it would proceed and what results it might yield. Such were also my most immediate concerns in the First European Division.

So after you returned to Moscow and took up your post at the First European Division, did you continue to work with your French counterparts on this initiative?

Again, due to my position at the Ministry, I was directly responsible for relations with France. And three years later, in 1971, the Soviet Union finally made a major move in the right direction. That year, it was decided that Brezhnev would make a trip to the Western world, and France was to be his destination. Here, I want to draw attention to a considerable move on our part, which took place in 1971. Given that this was to be his first trip abroad since the well-known difficult events that had taken place in Europe, the preparations for this official visit were given close attention and special care. The task at hand was to achieve something very significant in order to ensure a dramatic turnaround regarding *détente* and peace in Europe. We were summoned to put a new spin on international affairs.

In order to reach this goal and prepare the visit, a small group of staff of the Foreign Ministry Head Office and the Cabinet gathered and set off for the famous *dacha* in Zavidovo.¹⁰ I was a part of this group and Brezhnev himself was also in attendance. The rough plan of work was agreed with Brezhnev every morning, and after that, the tasks were divided among us. Then, we prepared the draft papers in groups of three or two, while some of us had to be working on their own. In the afternoon, Brezhnev would discuss the results of our work and these discussions often continued around the dining table, since during our stay in Zavidovo we shared all our meals, including breakfast.

The atmosphere in the *dacha* made for a tight-knit group, and that enabled us to engage in a fairly uninhibited exchange of views and approaches. We tried to work out and express what was to be the main political substance of Brezhnev's visit to France, for it was clear that this would be more than just a bilateral visit. Brezhnev recognized that fact, and therefore, he knew he would be in the spotlight. So much depended on the attitude of the national leader, on how he approached the issue with his counterpart and his views on the implementation. This is also why it was so important (and at the same time very interesting) to listen to what he had to say. The way we would proceed was to have every author read his proposal aloud to Brezhnev, and then there were

¹⁰ Zavidovo is a village situated in a nature reserve 150 kilometres from Moscow. The residence used to serve Soviet leaders as a retreat and it is used for official purposes by the Presidents of Russia in the same way today.

individual comments or he would go into particular digressions on a given subject. The final results reached were sent for approval to the Politburo.

So there we were, comfortably seated, reading aloud, considering things from different angles and discussing their implications. Brezhnev took an active part in the discussions and would incessantly revert to the problem of peace in Europe. I remember that he didn't like the first version of a text on European history which had been written by a member of our team and refined in diplomatic language.

However, Brezhnev did not propose an alternative wording. That was not the way our work was organized. He simply started to discuss the scale and dramatic nature of European history, speaking of Europe as a continent on which civilizations of importance to the entire world had arisen, a place where empires had risen and fallen, through which tornados of violence and war had swept, a land that had witnessed massive movements of people. All this he combined with memories of World War II, recalling his own life experience, and concluding, as always, with his sincere wish that, at long last, this war-torn Europe should be granted the peace and tranquillity which it had not only earned through suffering, but which it also so much deserved.

He explained: "On the front, we dreamed of the day when the gunfire would fall silent and we could travel to Paris, climb the Eiffel Tower and cry out for everyone around to hear: 'It's all over! It's over forever!' And we need to write about this in a graphic way ... and not just write and say things, but actually act!" In short, he had an idea that something on a large scale needed to be done for Europe and this notion was deeply rooted in him.

Were you then involved in concrete steps or in preparing draft proposals for Brezhnev's visit to Paris after you returned from Zavidovo?

Yes, of course. Kovalev and I proposed to submit to the French a completely unprecedented document entitled *Principles of Cooperation between the Soviet Union and France*.

Don't forget, this was in Cold War era Europe! Neither the question of Berlin nor that of a divided Germany had been resolved and two huge military groupings were facing each other along a disputed border. So what we proposed to the French was to work out principles of cooperation. We told them, "You're a member of NATO¹¹ and we are part of the Warsaw Pact, so let's formulate guidelines for building relations between two States under such conditions." We contemplated this as a long-term project intended not only to provide for a sound basis in our relations with France, but also, and first and foremost, to create a prototype for future decisions that might be taken by a pan-European conference. Another aspect of this proposal was that we would run through our thoughts with one of the key players in and major States of Western Europe.

¹¹ At that time, France had withdrawn from NATO's integrated military command, but remained a member of the alliance.

The French readily agreed to this proposal. The preparatory work was to be carried out in Moscow and to be completed before Brezhnev's departure for Paris. Gromyko brought this proposal for cooperation to Brezhnev's attention, and Brezhnev approved of it. So Gromyko played a leading role in the negotiations by promoting the idea from the very outset. The draft of this document was submitted to and then approved by the leadership, just before Brezhnev left for France.

Once the discussions began, they proved to be difficult, very difficult. Later on, after Gromyko got involved, an unusual system of negotiations was instituted. The French entrusted their Ambassador to Moscow, Roger Seydoux¹², a very fine diplomat, with continuing the negotiations in our capital. He had direct contact with senior officials at our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and agreement was reached immediately on almost everything we required. These matters could not be settled by telegram, and so face-to-face negotiations turned out to be much more effective.

The main problem lay in defining the set of principles that could govern the relations among European States. Our intention was not to formulate principles of cooperation that would be applicable only between the Soviet Union and France, but to set an example for all European States. Therefore, we included a special section listing those principles on which relations between all European States must be based. This was the main thrust of our plan. As I said before, we were thinking about something that held great promise, about the conference itself, about a possible prototype formulation for the final document and about things that were difficult to consider in concrete terms in those times.

Was the principle of “inviolability of frontiers” or their “immutability” one of these difficult concepts?

The main task for us was to devise and refine the formulation of principles governing relations between European countries and to provide for their meticulous observance. Such principles had to be made fundamental, if European security was to be strengthened and maintained. Moscow had a firm position on that matter, which was that the principle of the inviolability of frontiers was to be made a chief subject. So we began to discuss this question in particular and noted that our mutual political understanding of the matter was sound and profound.

During the discussions, we concurred on a set of five principles and we also came to an agreement regarding their wording. We proposed that the inviolability of frontiers be set forth as a leading principle, followed by the principles of non-intervention in internal affairs; equality; independence; and refraining from the threat or use of force.

¹² Roger Seydoux (Fornier) de Clausonne (1908–1985) was a fourth-generation French diplomat who had distinguished himself as a member of the French Resistance and as a professor of political science. In 1945, he co-founded the Institute for Political Studies (IEP) under the aegis of the University of Paris and five years later he left his academic career to follow the diplomatic path, which took him to

New York as Counsellor from 1950 to 1952; he was then appointed High Commissioner for Tunisia (1955–1956) and Morocco (1960–1962). Between 1963 and 1967, he represented France at the UN, and from 1967 to 1968, he served as member of the NATO North Atlantic Council. He left for Moscow in 1968, where he remained as French Ambassador until 1973.

The French were not opposed to the formulation of the principle of inviolability, but under no circumstances was it to be in first place. They agreed to numbering, but only if the principle of the inviolability of frontiers was not number 1! The order in which these principles were to appear was of prime importance in our diplomatic talks and was often central in our discussions on various issues of substance. But Paris was extremely firm on its position and sometimes the negotiations were quite “heated”.

I remember when we finally resolved the issue after a long day’s negotiation between Gromyko and Seydoux. It was well after midnight, and morning drew closer while the impasse became more constraining and unpleasant. Again and again Gromyko put forward his arguments in favour of what we thought to be the leading principle. He then listened to what the French had to say, and right after that, he would repeat his arguments again. The French Ambassador, Roger Seydoux, had worked at the United Nations as Permanent Representative. Therefore, he was aware that different organizational options were available, which could help to resolve difficult problems that were being dragged out in a never-ending session, and so he said: “Let’s entrust Dubinin and the next-ranking diplomat at my Embassy with this. They can go to a separate office and work on the matter; we have a long list of other issues to tend to. Let them think of a way to resolve this question and come back to us with an option acceptable to us both”, to which Gromyko agreed.

We were sent to a neighbouring office. It was quiet, at around 3 a.m., and we were served some hot tea. I was rehearsing all the different arguments we had spent our day and night discussing, but once the tea had been brought, I started to relax, and I felt my colleague had also regained his composure. I suggested: “We have five principles. Let’s cross out all the numbers and replace them with dashes. A dash followed by a principle, and the dispute is resolved! Would France not agree on this basis to have ‘inviolability of frontiers’ set after the first dash? It’s a principle, just like all the others. We could place the second dash next to ‘non-intervention in internal affairs’, for example”.

He gave it some thought, took a sip of tea and answered: “That might work. But I suggest that you don’t chase after your Minister. Instead, let’s drink our tea and chat a little about this and that; otherwise, it will look like we have reached an agreement too easily.”

So after a while, we went in and read our solution to Gromyko and Seydoux. Gromyko nodded in approval and said: “Fine, I can accept that.” The draft was sent off to Paris and the answer came back the next morning: “Text approved”. And so the problem was resolved.

If I’m not mistaken, the ten principles of the *Helsinki Final Act* had not only been outlined and arranged in a different order in the “Blue Book” (with the inviolability of frontiers listed third) in 1973, but they were also enumerated in a UN General Assembly resolution adopted in 1970.

Now let me tell you what all this led to a few years later at the actual Conference, during the drafting of the *Final Act*. In the *Final Act*, the principles of cooperation did become a declaration of ten principles that were to guide the participating States in their mutual relations.

This means that our ideas had been accepted by all the participating States. But just as in the 1960s, we were faced with the same question that had arisen in our negotiations with the French: Which principle was to be the main one? And how should these principles be presented? We decided to start with a preamble sentence along these lines: “All the principles presented hereby are of primary significance – meaning, they are all ‘number one’. Consequently, they should be applied uniformly and meticulously without any kind of hierarchy, and each principle should be understood as an inseparable part of all the others. No single principle can take precedence over the others.”

If you check the supporting documents, you will see that this same idea was expressed in possibly broader terms, but I remember that a very similar sentence was enshrined in the text of the CSCE *Final Act*.¹³

So since we have reached the point at which the language of the *Final Act* was being formulated, could you tell us a little more about how the decision-making process for the Conference was decided upon?

One of the most important questions discussed in Dipoli concerned the preparations for the Conference, its rules of procedure and how decisions should be adopted – a key question for any multilateral forum. Gromyko was dealing with this question personally within the Foreign Ministry. He had a really good understanding of these matters because he had been one of the co-authors of the Charter of the United Nations. At that time, a lot of work had been done on the question of how the Security Council and other UN bodies were to operate, but we quickly realized that that was not the answer to how the CSCE decisions should be adopted.

A good number of other options could be found in international practice. For example, decisions may be taken by a simple majority. But that excludes the minority and every country wants to make sure that its interests are protected. No country wants to find itself in a situation in which other countries decide on its behalf, against its will and contrary to its interests, and it must nonetheless comply with a decision taken by the majority. Then there are also qualified majorities, the most common of which is that of two thirds of the votes. Gromyko reasoned: “All right then; what will two thirds of the votes look like? Let’s take the socialist countries; how many of them are there? Five, six, seven countries out of 35 States? But it might be possible to devise a qualified majority so that even seven countries could block any decision if it wasn’t in line with their interests.” He pondered this.

Finally, the consensus solution prevailed. The crux of the matter here is that, if someone said something I didn’t like and I objected to it, the decision couldn’t go through. Was it difficult to adopt decisions under such an arrangement? Yes! But on the

¹³ This reference can be found in the fourth paragraph of principle X at the end of the Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States: [...] “All the principles set forth above are of primary significance and, accordingly, they will be equally and unreservedly applied, each of them being interpreted taking into account the others.”[...]

other hand, this type of decision-making process requires consideration of the interests of all those concerned. Consensus is also the only way to ensure that the decision taken will have to be genuinely carried out and in all probability will be carried out by all the parties. In other words, this was the soundest and most reliable solution. But what's more, this was to be a form of decision-making under which every country would be able to fully protect its interests if they were not taken into account by others.

On the whole, this is the most democratic approach in a multilateral process. If you don't like something in a proposal, you have to work on it together and look for a wording that is acceptable to all. After giving much thought to the matter, Gromyko became firmly convinced that the rule of consensus should be introduced. The other socialist countries went along with this, and so when the question was discussed at the preliminary consultations in Dipoli, it met with understanding by all concerned and was formulated in the fullest possible form,¹⁴ namely, as one of the CSCE's rules of procedure.

If even a comma wasn't to someone's liking, the decision would not be adopted. When the principle of the inviolability of frontiers was being formulated, there was indeed a long dispute as to whether there should be one or two commas, so every word and comma or dash counted.

The first stage of the Conference was closed after the adoption of the CSCE Helsinki Final Recommendations in July 1973. You were present at that stage and continued to be a part of the Soviet delegation a few weeks later, when the second stage started in Geneva. Did the composition of your delegation change a lot during this stage?

When our delegation was formed for the first stage, it was supposed to be a simple trip by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Helsinki. It was therefore quite natural that I'd be included in the delegation as one of those who accompanied the Foreign Minister on his trips. But there was a much more serious selection process before the second stage. By then, it had become clear that we weren't talking about just a few weeks of meetings. I didn't have any say in my fate in this regard. I know now that Kovalev actively pushed for my inclusion in the delegation, but I hadn't known anything about it until I overheard a discussion when we were all in the Minister's office, during which Gromyko told Kovalev: "Your suggestion that Dubinin be included in the delegation is fine with me."

After some time, roughly a year later, when it became clear that the Conference would be dragging on for ages, the Minister began calling me back from Geneva to accompany him to the major Soviet-French meetings – meetings which involved both countries' leaders. As it turned out, my attendance at these meetings proved also to be useful for our delegation's work. At that point, I had really begun to enjoy the work in Geneva and I was happy that I'd landed that job. There were of course some

¹⁴In chapter 6 of the CSCE Helsinki Final Recommendations (1973), the Rules of Procedure included the definition of the consensus rule as follows: "Decisions of the Conference shall be taken by consensus. Consensus shall be understood

to mean the absence of any objection expressed by a representative and submitted by him as constituting an obstacle to the taking of the decision in question."

difficulties, but in general, there was a democratic atmosphere within our delegation. With the exception of some special operations that concerned just a few, we discussed all questions collectively and in a very collegial manner, and the views of all the members of the delegation were, if not always retained, then at least considered and discussed.

Our initial instructions regarding how to conduct the negotiations were of a general political nature, although some questions, such as that of the inviolability of frontiers, were formulated so as to reflect the very essence of our position on the principle. Then, in addition to general instructions and directives, which remained in force for a long time – in some cases for the duration of our work – individual decisions were taken on specific issues and these decisions were also of a specific nature. One of the areas concerned measures of military *détente*, and we received instructions from Moscow as to the last specific detail. We played a part in the preparation of these instructions, but their formulation rested with our colleagues in Moscow.

As for the third basket, we often didn't receive any instructions as such, but we always used wording that was strictly in line with what Moscow wanted. The idea that everything was difficult and complicated regarding this dimension isn't true; on the contrary, it was extremely interesting work. We had some very good specialists who knew each dossier exceptionally well. For culture, we selected people from the Ministry of Culture, from everywhere. And for consular affairs, we had the best specialist in that field, Lieutenant-General Sergey Kondrashov¹⁵ of the KGB, who worked with me on these matters. Of course, he always expressed the views of the KGB, which was perfectly natural, so we never had any internal disagreements.

From time to time, when the Conference was in recess, Kovalev would go to Moscow and report to the relevant departments, because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not responsible for the specifics in some of the politico-military issues; instead, it left them to the KGB or the Central Committee or some other specific department in charge of such issues. Kovalev discussed the content of the wording, if not the actual wording, and we then followed the instructions he came back with to the letter, and if there was a need to change anything, we always cleared it with him beforehand.

In addition to the coded reports the delegation sent to Moscow (which went into absolutely every detail of the progress achieved), we hung four rolls of paper on the wall in our office, and word by word, phrase by phrase, we added what had been prepared and agreed upon. Gromyko did the same on the wall in his office in Moscow, so these spaghetti-like rolls of paper gradually grew down towards the floor as additions were pasted on, until full agreement on the *Final Act* had at last been reached. Our actions were fully synchronized, but Gromyko was personally responsible for everything as he monitored our progress.

¹⁵ Lieutenant General Sergey Aleksandrovich Kondrashov started his professional career as Soviet reconnaissance officer and further as interpreter for foreign delegations at the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS). As of 1951, he was engaged in the Foreign Intelligence Service and in 1962 he was appointed Deputy Head of the "D" department (disinformation "active

measures") and left for East Germany a few years later. As of 1968, he worked alternatively as pedagogue, trainer and interpreter. In the 1970s, he was promoted to Deputy Chief of Foreign Intelligence and Deputy to the Chief of the Border Monitoring Section, before becoming senior consultant to Yury Andropov (then Chairman of the KGB).

With such a set-up, you must have been confident that the outcome of the second stage would be successful and was within reach.

When we left for Geneva in September 1973, I don't think anyone in Moscow or in any other capital had any idea what was in store for us. In Moscow, they simply said: "Off you go; it'll be at the utmost a matter of two or three months. Why would you need your wives to come?" We were given no actual directives regarding any final document. After all, nothing like this had ever been planned since the signing of the Charter of the United Nations in 1945.

Kovalev, who had read all about the Congress of Vienna held after the Napoleonic Wars¹⁶, shared with me that it would be a good idea if, following that international precedent, some kind of "final act" could be drawn up. This made a lot of sense, because Europe had emerged from a war without a treaty being signed; instead, it was beset with contradictions and disagreements. How were people to make sense of it all? It was actually a question of creating a new system, a system of the same magnitude as the Westphalian system¹⁷ or the system that emerged from the Congress of Vienna. This was an issue of precisely that magnitude. Therefore, the idea of a final act, as a genuinely major and historically significant document, was altogether appropriate. This point was accepted by our leadership, and we were easily able to promote it in our contacts with others.

What were the main issues for us? For us, making security-related problems part of a post-war settlement was extremely important, and that included establishing a clear definition of the principle of the inviolability of frontiers. That was the most important thing. That would be in first place for us, even without the numbering to mark its supremacy!

Our first "whale"¹⁸ was the first basket. The second whale was in fact the third basket, which dealt with humanitarian questions, and the third related to military *détente* and confidence-building measures. We of course also had a few economic issues that needed to be addressed, but I'm not sure they could be considered to have been "whale-sized". There is another consideration of consequence that emerged from our discussions, and that was the continuation of the process, or a follow-up procedure to be applied after the Conference. Even at the very outset, there was talk in Moscow of the idea of creating some kind of permanent body to assure continuity. However, the West was not yet ready to agree to such an idea. What's more, within the framework of these "whales", there were many other questions that we may have not regarded as being so important, but that were considered of prime importance by other countries.

¹⁶ The Congress of Vienna was held from September 1814 to June 1815 in order to draw up a plan to alter Europe politically and territorially so as to prevent the expansion of any one great power, such as that which Napoleon had brought about. The resulting document was signed on 18 June 1815 and was called the "Final Act" of the Congress of Vienna.

¹⁷ By signing the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, major European countries agreed to respect the principle of

territorial integrity. In the Westphalian system, the national interests and goals of States were widely assumed to go beyond those of any citizen or any ruler.

¹⁸ There is an old legend of the Mordvinians (an agricultural people of the central Volga provinces of European Russia) according to which the Earth is balanced on the back of three whales, who keep it afloat and safe from the underworld. Moving in different directions, the whales create and preserve the harmony and balance of our world.

So, back to the principle of the inviolability of frontiers – you said earlier that agreement on its pre-eminent position had been an obstacle for the French during the Dipoli consultations. What happened in Geneva?

Our leaders' insistence on the inviolability of frontiers reflected the opinion and feeling of every member of our delegation. It was bought with the blood of Soviet people in World War II. This principle had to be set out in crystal clear terms in order that there be no room left for any preconditions or manipulations, and that this principle be free from any possibility of arbitrary interpretation or misinterpretation – in a word, that it be made unassailable.

What difficulties arose here? Well, an obstacle arose out of the fact that, while the Federal Republic of Germany allegedly did not oppose this principle, it took the view that a provision should be added concerning the possibility of changing frontiers by peaceful means. We were more than aware of what the West Germans were implying by introducing such a notion, but at the same time, if we wanted consensus to be reached, it was necessary to include some provisions along the lines of what the Germans were demanding. This is one of those issues that went beyond mere negotiations between delegations. The leaders of all the participating States, not only our own, were well aware of any question regarding the slightest textual change to this principle, as all of this was discussed carefully *via* appointed ambassadors. Sometimes such discussions turned into bilateral talks at the highest level and our delegation saw fairly clearly that, by seeking some kind of mutual understanding as to how to defuse this matter, we would perhaps reach an agreement by the end of the Conference.

We thought that, if we succeeded in removing this phrase [changing frontiers by peaceful means], we could say that it would be a “floating phrase”, for which we would find a place later on in one of the agreed principles. Our thinking went something like this: the West Germans would be satisfied because the Conference would not delete their phrase, and their interests would thus be taken into account in some form. But the question as to how to put our words into action was a bit trickier. We knew very well that under no circumstances would the NATO countries agree to such a proposal on a point of principle coming from the Soviets. It would be rejected immediately, and there would be nothing more to talk about.

Did you figure that another delegation might be able to bring up the issue instead of you and get you out of this impasse?

Precisely, we needed to find a diplomat who would help us with this. It had to be a diplomat who was not from a NATO country nor from a neutral country, because neutral countries could act as they wished without damaging their own reputations. We needed to find a delegate who would personally agree to do this – perhaps even without receiving special instructions from his own capital.

We had started to establish quite a positive contact with the Spanish diplomats and delegates. Franco was still alive at that point and still very much in power. But among the Spanish diplomats there were people who were seeking their own place in the sun, individuals with some freedom of thought. So we decided to try out a young Spanish

diplomat, Javier Rupérez¹⁹, for this operation. I and other members of our delegation had had quite good relations with him, so during our confidential conversations, which we made sure to keep from the head of his delegation, we were able to reach an agreement, and he asked: “All right, so what is it you expect from me?”

What was required of him – and, as it turns out, what was required of Spain (because he was to speak as the Spanish representative, even if not the main one) – was to propose that the part of the commitment concerning the possibility of changing frontiers by peaceful means be removed from the draft principle of the inviolability of frontiers and hover over the text as a floating phrase, pending a subsequent decision on where it should be inserted.

We discussed the setting in which this move would appear most plausible, because everyone’s attention, or maybe I should say suspicions (taking into account what was happening in the corridors), was highly sensitized. We therefore decided to drag out the next round of discussions on the question in which we would be stressing our point of principle – just to bring this discussion to a high level of tension. And then, the idea was for Rupérez to take the floor and say: “I have this proposal.” And the bemused delegates would hear this completely new revelation and it would bring a solution to our impasse.

The moment had to be selected carefully. It was decided that one of our delegates would be asked to carefully determine this moment and Kovalev and I would be sitting behind him. The signal for the Spanish delegate sitting across the meeting room was that our delegate would take a bunch of keys out of his pocket and nonchalantly throw them onto the table. At that moment, Rupérez was to raise his hand and ask for the floor so as to introduce the proposal. And what would the Soviet Union do? It would remain silent, not uttering a word. And what would the others do? They’d be dumbfounded! In fact, no one – including the Germans – would know what to say!

And that is exactly what happened. Our man threw his keys onto the table; Rupérez said what he thought should be done next, and after some time had elapsed, the Chairman suggested that we take a break. When the break was announced, everyone went off to write telegrams and ask their governments what would be the implications of having a floating phrase inserted above all the principles. We of course put on a show in the corridors when people approached us. “This idea is so unexpected; We too are awaiting instructions, as we have had to ask our capital what to do about this.” Basically, we answered whatever came into our heads, and ultimately, it worked. As I told you before, the debate was very difficult, very intense, on this basic issue. At one of the key moments in this confrontation, I was in the corridor with Kovalev and he turned to a delegate from the Federal Republic of Germany, asking: “And what are you going to do if I get new instructions?” The German delegate said: “I will smash your face”. Just to say that the stakes and tensions were really high at that point, but in the end, even that matter was resolved.

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¹⁹ Javier Rupérez continued to serve as Spain’s head of delegation to the CSCE from 1980 to 1982 (during the Madrid Follow-up Meeting), and he went on to represent Spain as Ambassador to NATO from 1982 to 1983. He was

the Spanish Ambassador to the United States from 2000 to 2004, before being appointed Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and later on Executive Director of the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Speaking of intense moments during the negotiations, your ex-colleagues mentioned that, from Dipoli up to the eve of the Summit meeting in 1975, Malta appeared to be particularly unyielding regarding the indivisibility of the security in the Mediterranean region from the security of Europe as a whole. Do you recall those discussions?

I had made an appointment with the head of the Maltese delegation, Joseph Kingswell²⁰, one morning in Geneva in the summer of 1975. So I took my place at the far end of the foyer, waiting for the Maltese ambassador to turn up. After a short while I saw Kingswell himself coming towards me, accompanied by our executive secretary. We sat down and exchanged pleasantries, and then I decided to come straight to the point and told him that, in 15 or 20 minutes' time, a meeting between Kissinger and Gromyko was going to start right next door in the Intercontinental Hotel. I told him that this was a unique opportunity, and possibly the last one to solve the problem that was of such great interest to Malta. I said we were prepared to help, that I was prepared to help personally, provided that he immediately informed me of his fallback position regarding this thorny issue. Were I to be informed of this position, then in a few minutes it would become the subject of discussion between Gromyko and Kissinger, with all the consequences that that would entail.

Did I know that Kingswell had a fallback position? Of course not! But logically, he had to have one. Only if there were a reasonable fallback position was there the possibility of a compromise, without which everyone would have ended up losing, including Malta. Instead of answering, Kingswell took out his wallet, opened it and pulled out a thin slip of paper that looked a bit like a telex tape. There were a few handwritten words on it. Then he said: "Write this down." And he proceeded to dictate a few words to me. I wrote it down. I'll try to give you a short excerpt from that text: "... with the purpose of contributing to peace, reducing armed forces in the Mediterranean region ..."

I immediately saw that this was the solution to our problem: There was no reference to Iran or to the Persian Gulf countries. But the main thing was that there were no demands on the United States to withdraw its armed forces or navy from the Mediterranean. But it was none of my business, so I did not want to get involved in this discussion, and anyway every minute was precious. I simply thanked him and said goodbye, since I had to rush. It was almost 10 o'clock, when the meeting between Gromyko and Kissinger was due to start.

20 Joseph Attard Kingswell (1925–2002), was a Maltese trade unionist and diplomat. He served as General Secretary to the General Workers Union of Malta. He was appointed Ambassador of Malta to Belgium and the Ambassador Extraordinary to Norway. In 1975, he had been asked by Prime Minister Dom Mintoff to travel to Geneva to strengthen the Maltese delegation in the negotiations. Kingswell had apparently been removed from the management of the General Workers Union because he had helped the previous government to make an unfavourable deal with the British

Government regarding the redundancies and compensation of workers employed with the UK Services on the rundown of the military bases in Malta. Another clash had been his opposition to the unification of the Union with the Malta Labour Party, as Kingswell outspokenly said that such a union was not in the interest of the workers. Between 1987 and 1996, he served as adviser to Prime Minister Fenech Adami, with special responsibilities for Malta Drydocks and Marsa Shipbuilding.

In the car, I jotted down a Russian translation of the phrase, and then when I arrived at the Intercontinental Hotel, I had no passes, but I managed to get past all the checkpoints and barriers to the meeting room where everybody was sitting around the negotiating table. I said a few words to Kovalev and handed him the paper with the Maltese Ambassador's wording to Gromyko without much explanation. The Minister glanced at this piece of paper and took it all in so calmly that I couldn't help thinking that perhaps I ought to say something further to him and explain what it was all about.

I took a seat at the far end of the table. A few jokes were exchanged before the meeting started, and then Gromyko, turning to Kissinger, said in measured tones: "I propose that we begin with the question of the pan-European conference and more specifically with the question of Malta." Kissinger listened to these words with little enthusiasm. Looking dour, he replied: "I have no objection, of course, but there's nothing to talk about." The meeting had run into a complete dead end – what were we supposed to discuss? "There's a new proposal by Malta," Gromyko interjected nonchalantly. Kissinger looked disturbed and more serious. Instead of answering, he turned to the two people sitting on his right and left. From the far end of the room, Ambassador Sherer, the head of the American delegation at the talks, hurried over to him, accompanied by a few other members of the delegation. They began whispering. Now Kissinger didn't only look disturbed but clearly troubled: "What new proposals by Malta are you talking about? We don't have any proposal, we haven't even heard about anything."

Gromyko explained: "We got them just a little while ago." Kissinger said mistrustfully: "I hope that there's no reference to the Sixth Fleet²¹ in this new wording." Gromyko answered: "There's no mention in it about that." He proposed to Kissinger that they suspend the meeting and have a chat, one-on-one. They both retired to the far end of the small room. Their conversation was brief, and they soon returned to the table, clearly very satisfied with themselves, and explained: "We've come to an agreement; the formulation works for us." From that point on, it was up to our delegations to convince our allies to include the sentence in the *Final Act*. This had to be done very carefully; after all, it was a sensitive matter and we could not fail. At the same time, we had to prevent the suspicion on anyone's part that we were acting in collusion – all the more so since there was no conspiracy in the strict meaning of the term.

The talks moved on to a different topic and I had nothing further to do at this Soviet-American meeting. The remaining business regarding this "Maltese crisis" now consisted only of finding the right techniques for solving such matters, although these were not simple ones. A few days would be needed at this busy beehive of a Conference for the words extracted from Kingswell's wallet to be accepted by all for inclusion in the draft *Helsinki Final Act*. The NATO group met not only in Geneva, but also at its Brussels headquarters. The Warsaw Pact delegations also conferred among themselves. And then the neutral countries huddled in consultation. It was not only necessary to convince people of the merits of the proposed wording, but also to gently turn

21 The US Sixth Fleet maintains the American naval presence in the Mediterranean and is based in Naples, Italy.

down even better proposals, to convince the hesitant and to give those who had their doubts an opportunity to await instructions from their capitals. In order to make this operation more credible, the senior officials of our delegation informed nobody from our team of diplomats of the true origin of the proposal and solution.

Finally the wording was accepted. The entire text of the annex was also approved. I'll read out how it sounded in the end: "In order to advance the objectives set forth above ..." – this refers to the part of the Conference that dealt with the Mediterranean problem – "... the participating States also declare their intention of maintaining and amplifying the contacts and dialogue as initiated by the CSCE with the non-participating Mediterranean States to include all the States of the Mediterranean, with the purpose of contributing to peace, reducing armed forces in the region, strengthening security, lessening tensions in the region, and widening the scope of cooperation, ends in which all share a common interest, as well as with the purpose of defining further common objectives. The participating States would seek, in the framework of their multilateral efforts, to encourage progress and appropriate initiatives and to proceed to an exchange of views on the attainment of the above purposes." End of quote.²²

Anyway, there's no need for you to rack your brain trying to figure out the meaning of these words, which proved so difficult to string together. I've emphasized only a few of them, the ones that made it possible to untangle the Maltese knot. What I read out to you just now, was what we copied from Kingswell's piece of paper. And you can read yourself what appeared in the *Final Act* in this special passage that dealt with the question of the Mediterranean.

Did that settle the claims and requirements Malta kept advancing?

Let me tell you the end of the story. Five years went by and the second Follow-up Meeting of the CSCE participating States began in Madrid. I had been appointed Ambassador to Spain at the time, and so I headed our delegation at the preparatory meeting. Many veterans of the Geneva phase travelled to the Spanish capital and so we had meetings accompanied by reminiscences. A member of the Maltese delegation at the Geneva talks was also present – an old acquaintance of mine. Seeing him in Madrid, I was curious to learn what had become of ambassador Kingswell. I put this question to my Maltese acquaintance. His face darkened and he remained silent. I repeated my question: "Well, what about ambassador Kingswell? What has become of him? What is he doing now?" He finally replied: "I know what took place between you and Kingswell. It ended badly for him – very badly."

I couldn't believe my ears: "What happened? He did so much! Not only for the success of the Conference, but also for Malta itself. What's more, Kingswell shared with me the position held by the Maltese Prime Minister, Dom Mintoff, himself." And my Maltese friend continued: "That's what you think! Prime Minister Mintoff

²² Ambassador Dubinin actually read these passages directly from the Russian version of the *Helsinki Final Act* he had prepared and earmarked for the interview.

saw things differently. It's true that Kingswell did indeed reveal to you Malta's ultimate fallback position. And yes, it had been approved by Mintoff himself; but the Prime Minister regarded it as an extreme concession. He hoped that Malta would succeed in getting something more. In short, Mintoff was annoyed; in fact, he was extremely angry and he sacked Kingswell – not just from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but from the civil service altogether.”

When I heard this, I told him I felt sad: “If Kingswell hadn't taken that step, we wouldn't have what's written in the *Final Act!*” My interlocutor answered: “You asked me about ambassador Kingswell and I've told you everything.”

In a word, the diplomat's profession is a difficult one.

But, what about the Americans? Was there any trace of this Maltese episode in their public documents? Yes, the official records of the State Department on the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe published a few years later contain the answer by the head of the United States delegation, ambassador Sherer, to Kissinger's question, when he called him over to ask whether he knew anything about any new proposals by Malta. Sherer had stated then that unfortunately, before leaving for the meeting, he simply hadn't had the time to drop by the United States mission and check his mail. Nothing more... Well, at least that was their version of what occurred.²³

Were there any other major stumbling blocks you can recall which the Conference had to overcome before it could return to Helsinki?

Well, there was the problem of the level at which the final stage of the Conference was to be held in Helsinki. It had been said that the level of representation at the third stage would be decided by the participating States before the conclusion of the second stage. In other words, that question had been left open. On the other hand, the question was an extremely important one, especially for our leader, Brezhnev. He always thought that the third stage should take place at the highest level. As for other political leaders, one can imagine that they took the same view as the Soviet Union. But the Soviet Union made no secret of its position and constantly stressed that the third stage had to be held at the highest level.

In diplomacy, it is customary that even if your partner proposes something to you which may seem beneficial to you, it may be before all because he is the one who really needs it, so he also knows that he will have to pay some kind of price for it.

And there was much intrigue at the Conference surrounding the question of the level at which the third stage would be held. So our Western partners began diplomatic manoeuvring in order to protract the decision-making process, claiming, for example, that it was essential for us to weigh up whether it was worthwhile putting such a burden on the shoulders of our most important leaders, who had more important chores to

²³ The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library declassified in 2003 a number of transcripts from the Kissinger Reports, and among them, the transcript of the conversations Kissinger and Gromyko had in Geneva on 10 and 11 July 1975, in which the issue of Malta is covered at length.

do than travelling to Helsinki. The Western countries were naturally trying to extract as many concessions as possible from the Soviet Union during this time, precisely on those issues that were particularly important to them.

By the end of 1974, it had become evident that neither at the level of the delegations working in Geneva, nor at the level of the foreign ministries, were we anywhere near reaching a decision on the issue of whether or not to hold a summit. We succeeded in breaking through the solid wall of opposition with the assistance of France – in the person of its President at the time, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing. The French President was quicker than all the other Western leaders to see that the possible political results of the Conference and their significance for the future were far more important than any of the additional concessions the Western delegations in Geneva had been furiously trying to squeeze out of the Soviet Union.

Giscard d’Estaing was inclined to bring the discussions with Moscow to a conclusion by agreeing to have the final stage held at the level of heads of State or government. In doing so, the French President broke completely with the position of his own Foreign Minister, Jean Sauvagnargues, and obviously, with the whole French delegation taking part in the Conference. The latter had become totally obsessed with special arrangements, trade-offs, deals and the like.

But this breakthrough occurred under the following circumstances. Brezhnev’s visit to Paris was planned for early December 1974. This was to be the Soviet leader’s first meeting with the French President since Giscard d’Estaing’s election²⁴. The feeling in Moscow was that Giscard d’Estaing was ready to make some kind of political gesture towards Brezhnev. Moscow presumed that this gesture might concern the Conference, but it wasn’t clear what it would be. Gromyko summoned me to Moscow so that I, as always, could prepare the ground for Brezhnev’s meeting with Giscard d’Estaing. The primary goal for Brezhnev’s visit was to get the French President to agree to hold the third stage of the Conference at the highest level. Remember, this was still the end of 1974, and the Conference concluded in July 1975.

Was this high-level meeting expected to pave the way to a speedy resolution of the existing deadlock that the Conference had got itself into in the course of 1974?

The French diplomatic circles were better informed than we were about the intentions of their President and so they attempted to do everything possible to thwart what he had in mind. An exceptional situation, to put it mildly! The French press also unleashed a campaign of criticism. Giscard d’Estaing was publicly advised not to make concessions regarding the level at which the Conference should conclude. The newspaper *Le Quotidien de Paris* wrote that Giscard d’Estaing clearly wanted to bring something new to the debate, deviating from Western foreign policy.

²⁴These early presidential elections took place in two rounds, on 5 and 19 May. The President-elect, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, won over François Mitterrand by a very thin margin. The elections had been called for a month after the death of President Georges Pompidou (2 April 1974).

The talks between the leaders of the two countries took place at the *Château de Rambouillet*²⁵. At some point, Giscard d'Estaing proposed to Brezhnev that they go off on their own, taking the Foreign Ministers, plus Claude Arnaud²⁶ and me and the interpreters along with them. The French President began to talk about the Conference and asked Brezhnev a direct question regarding his view of that part of the communiqué that dealt with the subject of the pan-European conference.

This was a discussion between the heads of two countries; – a long conversation between two people who had had completely different upbringings and life experiences, and most importantly, belonged to two different schools of thought. Brezhnev knew exactly what he wanted, but was operating with general definitions that don't easily fit into the rules governing a political communiqué. Giscard d'Estaing, with his Cartesian rigour of thought, sought a logical and concise formulation. He looked relaxed and listened carefully to the interpretation in French, then when Russian was being spoken, he looked around and admired the magnificent carvings on the oak panelling that covered the walls.

Gromyko displayed fantastic restraint. He intervened in the conversation in the form of brief remarks only when Brezhnev directly turned to him or when his French counterpart, Minister Jean Sauvagnargues²⁷, attempted on more than one occasion to inject into the conversation something that was not at all acceptable. I admired his demeanour and self-control.

I had more than enough time to reflect on a wording that might best express our position. I jotted down a sentence in French, and after waiting for the right moment, asked Gromyko's permission to show it to the French. He agreed. Brezhnev, seeing the conversation between Gromyko and myself, remained silent, so I read the very short text out for all to hear.

No sooner had I finished speaking than Prince Konstantin Andronikov²⁸, the French interpreter, jumped up and with a fair degree of arrogance interjected: "I don't know about the substance, but in terms of French syntax, this sentence cannot stand as it is." Fortunately, however, Giscard d'Estaing turned towards Andronikov and said: "In my opinion, the French is fine; the main thing is that the wording expresses the meaning we want to convey."

²⁵ The *Château de Rambouillet* is located on the outskirts of Paris and until 2009 served as a secondary presidential residence. It was also a frequent venue for high-level political consultations, including the G-6 summit in 1975.

²⁶ Ambassador Claude Arnaud (1919–1991) had a very interesting career, taking him from continent to continent. He was posted at the French Embassy in Laos (1966–1968) and then left for Peking as ambassador plenipotentiary to China, a post he held from 1975 to 1979. He also acted as head of the French representation to NATO (1979–1981) and then as ambassador to the USSR (1981–1985). Ambassador Arnaud acted as an adviser to Roland Dumas, Minister of Foreign Affairs under the presidency of François Mitterrand (1985–1986), and was then appointed by Mitterrand to head

the department of the Foreign Ministry responsible for Africa and Madagascar.

²⁷ Jean Sauvagnargues (1915–2002) served as Minister of Foreign Affairs under Valéry Giscard d'Estaing from 1974 to 1976.

²⁸ Prince Konstantin Isaevich Andronikov (1916–1997) fled from Russia with his mother in 1920 and was naturalized as a French citizen in adulthood. After studying languages and theology, he engaged in a diplomatic career, starting in 1945 as interpreter and translator at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He acted as personal interpreter to the successive French Presidents Charles de Gaulle, Georges Pompidou and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

The leaders nodded to one another and the gap in the communiqué was filled with the following words: “Good conditions have been created for concluding the Conference as quickly as possible and for holding the third stage and signing the concluding documents at the highest level of representation.” This was essentially the wording I handed to the French in their language for further development.

And that was it. We then joined the other members of the delegation and everyone wanted to hear about the outcome of the meeting. Giscard d’Estaing said goodbye, walked past me and said in a low voice: “If anything comes up, let me know.” He walked down the stairs, got behind the controls of a helicopter parked on the inner lawn and took off in the direction of the Elysée Palace in the centre of Paris. Those who remained behind had what might best be described as mixed feelings. As for us, we understood that we had achieved a major diplomatic *coup*, but even to hint at this would not have been proper.

So, soon after our meeting with Giscard d’Estaing, we received a reply from the President of the United States, Gerald Ford, indicating his agreement on holding the Conference at the highest level. After that we heard from Willy Brandt and then from Harold Wilson. Now, however, the following questions arose: when was the Conference to be concluded? What exact date would be convenient for holding the meeting of the heads of State or government?

We had been given a powerful trump card enabling us to work on a project of magnitude together with the leaders of other countries. Obviously, in Moscow the view was the sooner the better. This was our general position, in addition to which summer was approaching and people were in bitter need of a break. So as this had to be dealt by high-level representatives, Brezhnev had messages sent to the United States, to France, to the Federal Republic of Germany and a number of other countries. It was first suggested that the Conference conclude on 30 June. A courteous reply was received from all to the effect that it should rather be during the second half of July. All of this was somewhat vague because, whereas previously, the problem had centred on the question of the level at which the Conference was to be concluded, now the manoeuvring began as to when it should be concluded. And each delegation with an interest in one or another aspect again made its actions dependent on what it would receive in return for a compromise. A struggle ensued on this subject and soon the defining features of this struggle became evident again.

And in terms of substance, what other issues of contention made the conclusion of the Geneva stage in 1975 so difficult?

The last major obstacle standing in the way of the approval of the *Final Act* and its submission for signature to the heads of State was the “Cyprus problem”. When the preparation of the *Final Act* in Geneva was close to completion following nearly two years of work, in March 1975, Turkey questioned the competence of the President of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, to represent the Republic of Cyprus at the Conference

on Security and Co-operation in Europe and his authority to sign the *Final Act* as leader of Cyprus.

Not long before this, the ethnic Turkish community on the island, in violation of the constitution of Cyprus and with the aid of Turkish military intervention, had declared its own State on that part of the island where most of the ethnic Turkish population lived. This State had not been recognized internationally, and Turkey had declared that Archbishop Makarios, the legally elected President of Cyprus, represented only the Greek community in Cyprus – not the State of Cyprus. Turkey objected to the participation of the President of Cyprus in the work of the third and main stage of the Conference. It also made the approval of the *Final Act* dependent on its demands being met. Nevertheless, Makarios was determined to be at the Helsinki Summit meeting in person, and the Greek delegation energetically supported Cyprus.

The Conference found itself in a complex situation. The conflict intensified and dragged on. Heated exchanges over this issue marked virtually every serious discussion regarding the conclusion of the Conference, with each of the parties endeavouring to have the Conference take a decision in its favour. Not a single attempt to come up with a solution met with success. Our delegation was guided by the Soviet Union's principled position in favour of the territorial integrity and independence of Cyprus, so we were ready to support the legitimacy of the Cypriot Government. We made no secret of where we stood in this matter, but all we had to do was utter a single word in any discussion and the number of countries participating in it would immediately increase as one or another of the NATO countries would get involved, Turkey being a member of NATO. However, we thought that this Cyprus representation problem was a fabricated issue, so our position was that the Cypriot Government should deal with the matter itself.

Well, this didn't solve anything. The tension reached its peak on the night of 21 to 22 July 1975, when I took over the chairmanship of the meeting. The reason I was in the chair was that, on 21 July, Kovalev, the head of our delegation, had received instructions from Moscow calling for him to return to the capital immediately to prepare Brezhnev's address to the meeting. Kovalev had to fly to Moscow on the morning of 22 July.

On 21 July, we went as usual to the meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Conference. As this was the last session of the Committee and also the closing session of the entire second stage, it went on from morning until midnight. Kovalev patiently sat there the whole time, but as midnight approached, he said that no end was in sight and that since the tempers were just starting to flare up, he had decided not to stay any further. At midnight, the chairmanship of the Co-ordinating Committee meeting was to pass to the Soviet Union, so this meant Kovalev was due to be chairing the Committee, yet he was scheduled to fly to Moscow in the morning. So, before leaving the hall, Kovalev turned to me and said: "Yuri Vladimirovich, there is no end in sight it seems, and in addition, the discussions are going awry. I need to go and rest a little and so I'd like to hand the chairmanship over to you." So when midnight came I assumed the chair. We had a fairly full agenda, so I set a brisk pace, but nevertheless at 2 a.m. we got stuck on the Cyprus question as usual. I found myself sandwiched between the representative of Turkey, the representative

of Cyprus, and the representative of Greece, and having to take into account all the other countries supporting either side.²⁹

This kind of skirmishing had become quite routine by then. I knew one had to maintain a strictly neutral position towards these squabbles, in terms of both substance, and tone of voice. Whenever the next speaker asked for the floor, I limited myself to saying: “I thank the distinguished representative of such-and-such. The distinguished representative of so-and-so now has the floor.” But I felt the tension building up in me. Sooner or later everyone wishing to would have had their say (as had been the case many times before), and silence would reign. Everyone, for the umpteenth time, would wonder: What’s the way out of this impasse? This was the last thing blocking the adoption of the *Final Act*, thus the tension. It would be so nice if someone suddenly proposed a draft decision on which the opposing parties could agree. But why should this happen now, if it hadn’t happened during the preceding months of work? There was no hope...

Was that not partly because the meeting had dragged out until dawn and you were all exhausted at the end of this two-year-long exercise?

Yes, in part maybe, but I was to chair this meeting and had no ready-made solutions to this deadlock. I listened attentively to the delegates’ wrangling, hoping to catch at least some new line of thought, some signal, which might make it possible to formulate a text capable of winning consensus approval. But nothing of the sort happened. There was just a repetition of the familiar irreconcilable positions, the same set of arguments and same kind of responses. The standard epilogue threatened: “No solution has been found and the question remains on the agenda. The next meeting will take place on such-and-such a date.”

A silence set in. I looked around the hall. No one else wanted to speak, nor were there any proposals. It would have been possible to call a recess, let’s say for half an hour, but by then it was already after 3 a.m. To suggest a recess would have been justified only if there was hope that a break could lead to a breakthrough. But there were no grounds for that hope. Better try to cut the Gordian knot straight away – in an unconventional way. And so I began saying what I myself had not yet clearly formulated in my head: “Distinguished colleagues, you’ve all heard everything that has just now been said here.” Silence. Who wouldn’t agree with that? Everyone had heard everything. So I simply continued: “I propose that we move on to the next agenda item.”

In line with customary practice, the decision to move to the next agenda item meant that the delegations viewed the question under review as having been exhausted and they decided to end all discussion of it. I raised my gavel and lowered it after waiting the few seconds necessary to allow for the simultaneous interpretation of my words.

²⁹ See Journal No. 83 of the Coordinating Committee, dated 21 July 1975, including an interpretative statement by Turkey on the alleged *coup d’état* of 15 July 1974, and claiming that the representation of emissaries from the Greek Cypriot administration could by no means imply their recognition as sole representatives of the States of Cyprus.

The representative of Cyprus refuted this claim by answering that the representation of any participating State is entirely within the ambit of competence of the government of that particular State. (This statement is also reported in the body of Journal No. 83.)

Total silence engulfed the meeting hall and slowly gave way to ever louder murmuring. The delegates who had been sitting there motionless began to show signs of animation. I looked around anxiously to see whether anyone had raised his hand in protest against this decision or, more accurately, against this way of settling a highly contentious issue. Would someone argue that consensus had not been reached and no decision had been adopted? No! The noise in the hall was the noise of approval. The decision was adopted. An oral move, not one formalized in any text, but a decision nonetheless, since no one had objected to ending the discussion of the Cyprus question at the Conference.

What did this mean? Above all, that Turkey had abandoned its attempts to prevent the legitimate leader of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, from travelling to Helsinki to sign the *Final Act*. The way to Helsinki for Makarios was open. Another extremely important factor was that this also meant that the last tricky issue had been solved and that the last obstacle to the adoption of the *Final Act* had been removed.

As this occurred to me, I urgently called for the draft document to be brought to me, with all the most recent amendments that had been adopted during that meeting. I asked whether there were any objections to approving the draft *Final Act* and transmitting it for signature to the heads of State or government. There were no objections, so consensus had been reached.

Nothing remained to be done. It was a few minutes past 3 a.m. The Conference had fulfilled its role. We had concluded the second stage of our pan-European conference.

How about the press? Were they aware of this major turn of events and was there anybody there in those early morning hours?

Well, when the meeting ended, we walked out into a completely deserted foyer. There, where for many days and nights before, countless journalists had been waiting for us in anticipation of the long-awaited news regarding the completion of the Geneva stage and the approval of the draft *Final Act*, there was nobody. The journalists had lost hope and given up. Even the most far-sighted of them did not believe that this was to be the last night in this lengthy and exhausting test of diplomatic endurance.

But no! A crumpled figure appeared at the far end of the foyer, rubbing his eyes, he came towards us. It was our Geneva correspondent from the TASS news agency. The most tenacious reporter in the world... What a guy! As he approached me, he asked: "Well, how's it going then, Yuri Vladimirovich? When is the next meeting scheduled for?" And I answered, "It's all over with! Now we are bound for Helsinki." He didn't believe me and hesitantly went on to inquire: "What am I supposed to report about then?" He rubbed his eyes again – and realizing the implications of what I had just said, he exclaimed: "Of course! I must report at once – send a telegram" and he disappeared. Incidentally, this Geneva TASS correspondent was awarded a medal for his actions.

And so it was that our country's news agency turned out to be not only the first but the only one to be in possession of information that could have been of interest at that moment to the entire world. In that connection, I was later told the following. We knew that the top leadership in Moscow was impatiently awaiting some news from Geneva, so that no sooner did the TASS report reach Moscow – than it was

immediately reported to the leader. The next question was how to report it to the rest of the world? We checked what the other news agencies were reporting and as it turned out that there was absolutely nothing. Did this mean that there was only the TASS report? Yes, that's right. The situation was so unusual that the reporter received instructions to check back with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to determine whether this information was indeed confirmed and to act only after that.

The closing meeting of the second stage had successfully ended, the news had been passed over to the media, but you had not yet informed Anatoly Kovalev of the outcome. So who – apart from the TASS agency – finally informed the top leadership in Moscow and what happened then?

After parting with our colleagues at the conference centre, we hurried to the mission. The cipher clerk was awaiting our return, so we started composing a short telegram: "On 22 July, at 3.45 a.m., the second stage of the pan-European Conference ended its work," and after pausing a bit I added "under the chairmanship of the delegation of the Soviet Union." Then I hesitated and wondered; whose signature should I include at the end? In formal terms, the role of head of delegation had been transferred to me, but Kovalev was still in Geneva; should I wake him up and inform him first? Why bother him? I asked myself. So, I signed in his name and had the telegram sent off.

Before we were to accompany Kovalev to the airport that morning, we went to get some sleep. Little did I know, that within only a few hours, these easily achieved agreements would be put to an additional and extremely serious test.

It all happened like this. I told Kovalev about our turbulent night over breakfast and I saw it made a very strong impression on him. However, he refrained from making any comments, and after we had seen him off at the airport, all the members of the delegation travelled back to the mission. There remained very little for us to do in Geneva – to send a telegram explaining the events in greater detail than what I had done the night before. We were then to collect our belongings and wait for the special plane from Moscow later on that day. So, when we came back to the mission instead of all that, Lev Isaakovich Mendelevich³⁰ started to speak and all the members of the delegation sat down at the table and listened with attention. Mendelevich was one of the most experienced Soviet negotiators and at that time an Ambassador-at-Large – a highly experienced diplomat with long years of service. As such, he had been appointed to deal with the Cyprus issue, which he did for all those months while those negotiations lasted. So, to come to the point, Lev Isaakovich Mendelevich, began to speak about the previous night and the skirmish surrounding the issue of Cyprus.

What he said in substance was this: "Yuri Vladimirovich, the more I think about it and the more I am convinced that you could have found better ways to reach more

³⁰ Lev Isaakovich Mendelevich (1918–1989) graduated from Moscow State University in 1941 and served in the Red Army from 1941 until 1945. That year, he was hired by the "Information Committee" of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and remained at the Committee's service until 1952. He was then transferred to the diplomatic services of the Soviet Foreign Ministry and given several missions abroad until 1965. During this time he also worked for the unit in charge

of international organizations. From 1965 to 1968 he was in charge of the unit dealing with Latin America and from 1968 to 1970, he served as the Deputy Head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations in New York. Lev Isaakovich Mendelevich held the title of Soviet Ambassador-at-Large from 1972 to 1984, and attended the three stages of the CSCE in this capacity.

favourable results for Cyprus and you could have pushed through a decision to that effect during yesterday's meeting."

This came as a blow. This was more than just a statement – it was an implicit criticism that we, and more accurately I, had not done all we could for a friendly country whose position we were to support. The other members of the delegation hung their heads and stared at the floor. I knew that I was the one who had to reply, as I had not only been chairing that meeting, but also assumed the role of the head of delegation. So what was I supposed to reply? I could have said that the success of the Conference would produce such a positive effect that, with time, it might iron out a number of unresolved problems, including the Cyprus issue. But Lev Isaakovich knew all this already, so what was the use of telling him so? I could have argued that we were all in it together, including him – so why shake his fist now, after the fight was over? If I had expressed that thought, I would have been doubting Mendelevich's sincerity; I would be suspecting that he was after more than just trying to achieve the best scores for Soviet diplomacy. It wasn't good ... I would like to once again make one thing very clear here: Lev Isaakovich was an extremely experienced and skilled diplomat. It was he who had borne the main burden in formulating the principles governing relations between the participating States of the CSCE. The whole thing was no good ...

In view of what had been achieved, it will seem to the reader that none of this was of much importance – after all, even diplomats are just people. So, as a human being, I couldn't get myself to swallow these criticisms, all the more as they had been made in front of other people. So I said, "Fine, Lev Isaakovich. The meeting is over; the Conference has been concluded, but a possibility to do something about this still remains." And I explained that the meeting protocol had not yet been signed, so, as the chairman remains the chairman as long as he hasn't passed on the chairmanship, he can raise the question as to whether the session has been concluded or should be resumed. According to procedures, he could do this until his authority expired, that is until midnight, when there would theoretically be a change of chairmanship.

"So, Lev Isaakovich," I went on, relying on this formality, "I propose that you call an urgent meeting with the head of the Cypriot delegation, the deputy Foreign Minister, Andreas Mavrommatis, one on one. You have a close and excellent relationship with him." I told him: "Find out from him what he would like to get and promise him that we will do everything we can to help achieve his goals. For my part, I'll schedule a meeting with Ambassador Benler, the head of the Turkish delegation, for a later hour – I have a good relationship with him – in order to discuss once again possible alternatives, before the meeting, which I shall attempt to resume."

That move was not just daring, but it was bold and dangerous, like the attack of a fencer leaving himself open to a fatal wound, but there was no other way out. Everybody agreed with this plan and we went our separate ways, awaiting news following Mendelevich's conversation with Mavrommatis. A couple of long hours passed and finally, when the Cypriot minister left, Lev Isaakovich came into the room and we all directed our attention towards him. He looked embarrassed. "We spoke frankly," he said in a dejected tone. "We analysed the situation from different points of view. We spoke for a long time, but in the end, Mavrommatis said the outcome of

yesterday's meeting was the best of all options for Cyprus, and nothing further should be done." A wise man he was ...

I subsequently cancelled the meeting with the Turkish ambassador. The solution suggested to me by my intuition had withstood the test. I dispatched the telegram to Moscow without overburdening it with details.

And so we went our separate ways. It was time to pack up, among other things, the chairman's gavel as a memento. But where was it? Where had I put it? I couldn't find it. I asked our executive secretary whether he'd seen it. Looking a little sheepish, he brought me the gavel from his own office and explained with some embarrassment that he'd had his own plans for that souvenir. Anything can happen and usually does. For a long time the gavel gathered dust in my office and was an object of considerable curiosity for my grandson, who attempted to use it for its intended purpose – to hammer in a nail. Now it's in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Museum.

When you spoke of the tale of the three whales, you added that the review or follow-up of the decisions to be taken in Helsinki was another important consideration that had taken shape in a subcommittee. What do you think the Follow-up Meetings brought to the process?

The 1975 *Final Act* provided for the continuation of the multilateral, pan-European process by agreeing to a meeting of representatives of the CSCE participating States in Belgrade in 1977. I wasn't in Belgrade, but I want to talk about it because, without this first Follow-up Meeting, it would be impossible to understand the importance of the Madrid Follow-up Meeting. Belgrade was problematic and Madrid difficult, but both were crucial for the continuation of the pan-European process.

The Belgrade meeting basically provided a platform for a very bitter confrontation between East and West. It had been agreed that any work to implement decisions enshrined in the *Final Act* had to take place in the form of a discussion involving all the participating States. This was a decision that had been taken by consensus, and its significance had been agreed upon by all; however, although the CSCE was an extremely powerful diplomatic and political tool for overcoming the Cold War, it was ahead of its time by many years, if not decades. It came into being during the Cold War and the confrontation between East and West had not eased as quickly as the participants in the Helsinki Summit would have wished. So the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting was also a reflection of its times and was coloured by all the existing confrontations.

The fact is that little was done at both the Belgrade and the Madrid Follow-up Meetings to examine the implementation of the CSCE decisions enshrined in the *Final Act*. There was supposed to be a discussion on the political situation in the world, but this in fact took the form of polemics between the Soviet Union and the United States, and between the Eastern and Western blocs in general. The Belgrade Follow-up Meeting that started in 1977 brought those polemics to the attention of the world. There was little specific material for enquiring into what had, or had not, been implemented two years after the *Final Act* had been signed. However, there was more

than enough material for polemics, because the Helsinki Accords were regarded in the United States as a severe diplomatic defeat.

The overwhelming view, as expressed in public opinion and the media, was that for the United States this was a “diplomatic Munich”³¹. For that reason, there was a very strong desire to take revenge for this diplomatic defeat. The main cause, however, was that relations between the Soviet Union and the United States during this period were deteriorating from day to day.

The Americans used the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting to engage in a fierce political battle on all the issues that were of interest to them. Naturally, the Soviet Union had to react to this, and that is how the entire Belgrade Meeting turned into an arena of intense altercations. That’s how it began and that’s how it ended. Not a single decision was adopted in Belgrade that measurably advanced the European process. The only positive decision adopted at the Belgrade Meeting was to convene another meeting of the same type, which was to be the Madrid Follow-up Meeting in 1980.

Incidentally, the choice of the venue, Madrid, resulted from a joint proposal by Ambassador Kovalev and me. This was because, at that time, Spain had just engaged in major democratic reforms³², and we believed that the holding of an international event with a wide enough scope, such as the CSCE, would serve as a kind of incentive for Spanish democratic forces, who were seeking to complete those reforms and assure their success.

Would you like to tell us more about how this happened?

In June 1980, special consultations were held among the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact countries. They planned their approach to the Madrid Meeting in the light of what had happened in Belgrade. The Madrid Meeting had already been scheduled and a preparatory meeting was to start in September 1980. Regarding the Soviet Union’s attitude to possible meetings of the participating States following the Madrid Meeting, it was emphasized that (I paraphrase): “The Soviet Union intends to make its outlook on holding another meeting of the CSCE participating States dependent on the substance discussed, the atmosphere and the overall success of the Madrid Meeting. In no way do we intend to give the Western European countries the impression that the convening of any subsequent meeting of this type has been predetermined. Everything will depend on how the meeting in Madrid proceeds and what its outcome is.”

In other words, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries took a strong stance by calling into question the very idea of continuing with the pan-European process. This was an extremely rigid position (perhaps too unyielding), considering the enormous interest that had been prompted by the *Helsinki Final Act* and the new trend in international politics it engendered. The situation could be rectified only by returning the pan-European process to a constructive path or at least by calming the passions that had been aroused in Belgrade.



³¹ This is a reference to the summer Olympic Games, which took place in Munich in 1972 (and the dramatic circumstances in which 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team were taken hostage by the Palestinian group Black September and eventually killed, along with a German police officer).

³² General Francisco Franco died on 20 November 1975, and from that time on, Spain’s foreign policy was directed towards breaking out of the diplomatic isolation Franco had imposed on the country. This was achieved gradually by means of the inclusion of Spain in the European Community and NATO in 1982.

The Madrid Meeting was preceded by a preparatory gathering, which was to deal with a limited task – to draw up the agenda, organizational modalities and the programme for the meeting. Consequently, this preparatory meeting was to last nine weeks³³. As a resident ambassador in Spain, I was appointed head of our delegation for the preparatory meeting. We were issued with directives, which boiled down to the following: First, do everything possible to see to it that there is no repetition of what happened in Belgrade, where all the work had been concerned with nothing but polemics; second, ensure the proper conditions for the drawing up of new agreements so as to enable the pan-European process to move forward. In other words, what was required was to draft the right kind of agenda for the Madrid Meeting and to organize the holding of the Meeting in the right way, by formulating rules of procedure that would promote constructive work and the achievement of positive results.

Meanwhile, awareness grew in Moscow that political *détente* had to be supplemented by military *détente*. Against that background, the idea was born of holding a special conference on military *détente* and disarmament³⁴. Our delegation was instructed that its main task at the Madrid Meeting was to reach some form of agreement on the convening of such a conference.

Accordingly, it was believed that our interests would be best served by arranging the work of the main part of the Meeting in more or less the following way: An official opening; then an exchange of views both on the implementation of the *Final Act* and regarding further steps to strengthen security and develop cooperation in Europe; then the official submission of proposals regarding the implementation of the principles and agreements contained in the *Final Act*, with an exchange of views on that subject. While during the first part of the meeting, all the participants would be given the opportunity to express their opposing objectives and views, the intention was that the second part should be used for constructive work in order to move forward. There had been no provision for this possibility in the rules of procedure for the Belgrade Meeting – and I think that was a major mistake in its planning.

How long was the Madrid Meeting meant to last?

The directive indicated that the question was to be resolved at the main meeting. In Moscow, it was assumed in advance that it would be difficult to achieve the goals that had been set, since the United States intended to use the pan-European process to engage in polemics with the Soviet Union regarding human rights and not to reach any new decisions on expanded cooperation between the participants in that process. The directive on the continuation of the pan-European process itself was a very strict one – in Moscow, the position and influence of those who opposed that process had been strengthened, after what had happened at the Belgrade Meeting.

Accordingly, our delegation (and I personally, as its head) received a written directive that stated – and this is extremely important – that at the main meeting (not the

33 The preparatory meeting for the Madrid Follow-up Meeting started on 9 September and lasted until 10 November 1980.

contains reference to the agreement to convene a Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, to be held in Stockholm, starting 17 January 1984.

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preparatory one), when considering the adoption of a decision on the date of a forum of the Belgrade or Madrid type, we should emphasize: "... that such meetings can produce positive results only if the participating States demonstrate the political will to hold them in a constructive way and only if they do not base their calculations on the use of these meetings for the purpose of confrontation." The provisions of the *Helsinki Final Act*, which, in principle, provided for the holding of similar meetings, were repeated in the directive. Again: The implementation of that provision would depend on how the Madrid Meeting went. So we had a very difficult assignment and a very demanding directive.

Everything began in a fairly complicated way. On the eve of the preparatory meeting, I met the head of the United States delegation, Max Kampelman³⁵, a well-known US diplomat, who in the course of that meeting openly declared war on me, without concealing his attitude towards our country: "All my life I've hated the Soviet Union and have fought against it. And I intend to continue that battle at the Madrid Meeting!" I answered him in the following way: "I have no such feelings towards the United States and have never had them. And I have no desire for conflict. I see my task more modestly – to contribute to the preparation of the Madrid Meeting."

An easy life was not in the offing! The Meeting opened in the presence of the ministers of foreign affairs and the public. At the very outset, there was some unpleasantness. The procedure provided that the meeting would begin with a public session so that the press, television crews and everyone else would be invited. But immediately after it opened, the session was supposed to become a closed one, and all the representatives of the media were to be ushered out of the hall.

No sooner had it become a closed session than it would be necessary to conduct the first item of business, which was to determine which country would chair the first session. It was proposed that this be done by the drawing of lots. A simple matter: Everybody pulls out a piece of paper and you have your Chairman. It was up to the participants themselves to determine the procedure for the drawing of the lots, since this had not been stipulated in the "Blue Book". This operation was regarded as a technical one. Once the first country had been determined, what followed would proceed according to French alphabetical order, as had been the case with our chairmanship in Geneva on the last day of our meeting there.

But on that day in Madrid, the person overseeing the formal opening – the representative of Spain, as the host country – failed to declare a recess after his words of welcome. That meant that the session had remained open to the journalists, and he stated – right there in front of them – that we would proceed to the determination of the country that was to chair the first working session. When he said this, a murmur of bewilderment ran through the hall because, sitting there were experienced diplomats, and for them this didn't seem right. But everything was taking place under the glare of the spotlights.

The Spanish representative didn't wait for any kind of approval but, after these words, he simply waved his hand and a beautiful Spanish woman approached the

³⁵ Max Kampelman (1920–2013) was a lawyer, politician and negotiator in Washington D.C. in the early 60s. He was appointed deputy head of the US delegation to the CSCE

Madrid Follow-up Meeting and was known to be a fierce defender of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. Also see interview with Spencer Oliver in Chapter IX.

Chairman. In her hand she was holding something like a drum. She lowered her hand into the drum, took out a small piece of paper, and without looking at it herself, handed it to the Chairman. Glancing at the piece of paper, but without showing it to anyone else (the chairmanship was seated high on a platform while we, the rest of the representatives, were on the floor) he solemnly proclaimed: “The United States of America.” The Chairman of the first Madrid session would be the representative of the United States – the very same Kampelman I have already mentioned!

Kampelman immediately jumped up, and using the microphone, declared his gratitude to the lucky hand of the Spanish representative that had drawn that very fortunate lot. The hall erupted in noise.

Actually, the United States had every right to chair the session, just like any other country; but this episode was greeted with bewilderment, and everyone was looking in my direction. What would the Soviet representative do?

I understood, of course, that I had to prevent even a single muscle from twitching in my face. If I failed to maintain that set expression, that would immediately provide grounds for confrontation. So I took everything in with an absolutely unruffled look, but I thought: “Let’s make a mental note of this, and God willing, an opportunity for a rejoinder will present itself.”

Our intention was to deal with the tasks at hand as calmly as possible, so we had agreed with the other socialist countries not to exacerbate the situation and to refrain from making any proposals of our own that might at that time be regarded as being directed against the Western proposals. We wanted to work in the corridors, mainly with neutral countries, and through them, to float, promote and push through new ideas. That’s exactly how we began.

In order to have appropriate rules of procedure, we had to rectify what had happened in Belgrade, where the rules of procedure had opened the way only for squabbling and nothing else. There was no provision in them for proceeding to the submission of proposals or for drafting any kind of new decisions. The problem was that the Belgrade rules of procedure had not laid down any time frame and it was the absence of a time frame that had made it possible for the Belgrade Meeting to go on and on for as long it did.

The main controversy at the Madrid preparatory meeting essentially revolved around a simple question: “When will the squabbling end and when will we begin to submit proposals?” It was in this respect that the rules of procedure adopted in Madrid were radically different from those of the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting. What was ultimately written was: “The thorough exchange of views on the implementation of the provisions of the *Final Act* and the tasks defined by the Conference will be completed by the end of the sixth week.” A second point was that the sixth week was precisely identified in the actual timetable. This made it possible, however difficult the discussion might be, to finalize matters – something we didn’t have in Belgrade.

■■■■

The interview with Ambassador Dubinin was conducted in Russian on 27 and 28 July 2010 at two different locations by Prof. Andrei Zagorski of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).

Yuri V. Dubinin

Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin was born in Nalchik, (Kabardino-Balkaria Republic) in 1930. He graduated from the Moscow Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) in 1955 and joined the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs shortly thereafter. That year he was appointed officer at the embassy in France and as of 1956 he held a post at the UNESCO secretariat in Paris for three years. In 1959 he returned to the Foreign Ministry in Moscow, where he focused on Western European affairs.

Four years later, in 1963, Yuri Dubinin was again sent to Paris, initially as First Secretary and later on as Counsellor at the embassy of the USSR in France. In 1968 he returned to Moscow and moved from being deputy head to the position of head of the First European Section of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR.

Ambassador Yuri Dubinin was present at the initiation of the idea for holding a pan-European Conference in its very early stage and thanks to his key position in the relations the Soviet Union maintained with France in the mid 60's, (as well as to his expertise in Western European diplomacy), he was directly involved in the preparation and further in the conduct of the Conference throughout its three stages. In a capacity of advisor to- and member of the Soviet delegation, he accompanied the CSCE process through its preparatory phase in Dipoli, the CSCE first and second phase in Helsinki and Geneva, all he way up to the Helsinki Summit in 1975.

After the 1975 Summit, Ambassador Dubinin returned to head the First European Section at the Foreign Ministry and in 1978 he was appointed

Soviet Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Spain. In this capacity he served first as a head and then deputy head of the Soviet delegation to the Madrid Follow-up Meeting, which lasted from 1981 to 1983.

In 1986 Yuri Dubinin left for the United States where he was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. During this posting that lasted until 1990, he also served as Permanent Representative of the USSR to the United Nations.

He returned to France for one year in 1990, and in 1991, he was appointed Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Federation.

Ambassador Dubinin was nominated Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in 1994, a position he continued to assume during his posting as Ambassador to Ukraine from 1996 to 1999.

Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin retired from political functions in 1999. He continues to teach at the Moscow Institute of International Relations and is an active member of the Union of Russian Writers. He has authored the following three books on his diplomatic postings in France, Spain and the United States:

- *“Дипломатическая быль. Записки посла во Франции”* Москва, Издательство Росспэн, 1997.

[*“A true story of diplomacy – Notes of an Ambassador to France”*]

- *“Амбасадор! Амбасадор! Записки посла в Испании”* Москва, Издательство Росспэн, 1999.

[*“Ambassador ! Ambassador! – Notes of an Ambassador to Spain”*]

- *“Время перемен. Записки посла*



в США” Москва, Авиарус-XXI. 2003 [*“Times of change – Notes of a Ambassador to the USA”*]

- *“Embajador! Embajador!”* Union Fenosa Publishers, Vilabelda, Madrid, 2004.

Since 2009, he has written three more books published in Russian and French:

- *“Дипломатический марафон”* Москва – Издательство Колос. 2009. [*“A diplomatic Marathon”*]

- *“Мастерство переговоров”* Москва – Издательство Международные отношения, 2012. [*“The Mastery of negotiation”*]

- *“Moscou-Paris dans un tourbillon diplomatique. Témoignage d’un ambassadeur”* Imaginaria, Paris, 2012. [*“Moscow – Paris, in a diplomatic whirl. The Testimony of an Ambassador”*].

Ambassador Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin passed away in Moscow on 24 December 2013.



53. After speaking of economic cooperation between France and the Soviet Union during a bilateral meeting between Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Leonid Brezhnev at the Chateau de Rambouillet, a joint-communiqué was released, announcing that the CSCE stage III would take place at highest level of State representation (as mentioned by ambassador Y.V. Dubinin in his interview). (6 December 1974)



54. President Urho Kekkonen welcoming President Brezhnev and Foreign Minister Gromyko at their arrival from Leningrad to Helsinki Central Station. (29 July 1975)



55. *The Soviet delegation at the Helsinki Summit: President Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev, Foreign Minister Andrey Andreyevich Gromyko Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko. (31 July 1975)*



56. *Head of the Soviet delegation at the Preparatory Meeting of the Belgrade Follow-up: ambassador Yuliy Vorontsov (right) and his deputy, Sergey Kondrashov (left). (July 1977)*



57.



Spencer Oliver of the United States of America

My first association with the CSCE arose in 1972. At that time, I was the leader of an American delegation to the All-European Youth Security Conference that was taking place in Dipoli, Finland. It was a gathering organized by various youth organizations, including the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which was the world communist youth organization, and the Council of European National Youth Committees (CENYC), one of the western equivalents. They had persuaded almost every youth organization in Europe to come to this meeting, and a handful of youth organizations had come from the United States. I think the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) might have been there and the US Young Workers Liberation League, funded by the Soviets, was there.

And then you had the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL), of which I happened to be the President at the time. This was an organization made up of young Republican and young Democratic leaders, the purpose of which was to run international exchange programmes and participate in the NATO Young Political Leaders organization, of which I was also President. The State Department called me and asked me to come and talk to them about the possibility of leading a delegation to Dipoli to attend this All-European Youth Security Conference.¹ I had started an exchange programme the year before with Komsomol,² so I had started a very active

¹ This event took place in Dipoli between 26 and 31 August 1972 – two and a half months before the start of the Dipoli Consultations on 22 November 1972.

² The All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (usually known as "Komsomol") was the youth division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

engagement with Soviet youth leaders (who were not very young in those days). But we had had a number of debates and “full and frank” exchanges of views – particularly concerning human rights and democracy and related issues. The State Department actually sponsored those meetings, so they were familiar with these discussions and contacts.

Consequently, they asked me whether I would go to Dipoli and lead the ACYPL delegation. So I took the group (comprising both Republicans and Democrats) to Helsinki, to Dipoli, where we attended the All-European Youth Security Conference convened by the Finns. There was an attempt to negotiate some kind of a document, which went on for a couple of weeks. It was practically a verbal slugging match between the East and the West the entire time.

A lot of very bright young leaders were there. Carl Bildt³ was there for the Swedes and Volker Rühle from West Germany, who later became Defence Minister (after German reunification). And of course, our portfolio, our brief, was to continue to raise the issue of human rights. As much as the Soviets wanted security, we wanted human rights. It was basically security versus human rights. And we eventually negotiated a document after lots of tough exchanges and accusations and shouting across the parapets in Dipoli. The document that emerged was similar in structure to that of the *Helsinki Final Act*. It had all the three baskets, or rather the main three sections. So this is how I became very interested in the subject and began to follow its development.

When the Geneva phase started, Guy Coriden (who had been the Deputy Director for Cultural Exchanges in the State Department) briefed me before and during our exchanges with Komsomol. He later became the chief US negotiator for the third basket in Geneva. We stayed in touch, and since I was also President of the NATO Young Political Leaders, I was in Europe quite frequently. Several times, I stopped in at the CSCE proceedings in Geneva, and Guy briefed me on what was going on. Of course, the subject was familiar because I could see the similarity of the proceedings to those of the All-European Youth Security Conference.

Was this similarity just at surface level or was there a connection between these two meetings in Dipoli? Why did they both take place in Dipoli? Why Finland?

Well, the Finns, of course, were among the neutrals that were closest to the Soviets, both geographically and politically, so they were the ones who facilitated the invitation to come to Helsinki. President Urho Kekkonen was a key player on the political scene at that time. The Soviets had been trying to get a conference like this going since the late 1950s, so all that time they had been pushing for it. For a long time, though, the objective of the Soviets was to have an All-European Security Conference that *did not* include the United States and Canada.

³ Nils Daniel Carl Bildt is a Swedish politician and diplomat who was Prime Minister of Sweden from 1991 to 1994 and is currently Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs. He served as the European Union's Special Envoy to the Former Yugoslavia from June 1995, as Co-Chairman of the

Dayton Peace Conference in November 1995 and as High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina from December 1995 to June 1997. From 1999 to 2001, he was the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Balkans.

Eventually, what broke the ice was the Soviet recognition that the Americans and the Canadians had the right to have a say about security in Europe and that they should participate. America's interest in European security was also recognized by the Four-Power Agreement on Berlin⁴ and in the talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) taking place in Vienna, which were preconditions for the negotiations in Geneva to start.⁵

The first meeting in Dipoli was the main preparatory session that was supposed to define the modalities for the negotiations. It was in Dipoli that they adopted the famous "Blue Book", which included the rules of procedure setting out the consensus rule, the sharing of expenses, and other modalities. Once this blueprint had been drawn up in Dipoli and then blessed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Helsinki, the real CSCE negotiations began in Geneva.

Nobody knew how long the Geneva stage would last or even whether a document would ever be ready for the heads of State or government to sign (the signing eventually took place two years later, in 1975, at summit level in Helsinki). The outside world did not know what was going on in Geneva, since everything took place behind closed doors. There was little or no publicity associated with these negotiations, although there was some speculation and certainly criticism. But suddenly, in the late spring of 1975, came the announcement that there was going to be a summit and that US President Jerry Ford was going to Helsinki to meet with all the European leaders to sign the *Final Act*.

The reaction to this was extraordinarily negative in the United States – from hard-liners on the right and in particular from the diaspora of Eastern Europeans: The Latvians, the Lithuanians and the Estonians, as well as the Czechs and the Poles ... all those immigrant communities opposed the concept. Even the newspapers editorialized against it. The Chicago Tribune ran a headline saying: "Jerry, don't go!". Clearly, the initial perception of the Helsinki Summit was that it would lead to selling out Eastern Europe and agreeing to a divided Germany and the Soviet Union's hegemony over Eastern Europe. The news prompted extraordinarily negative public reactions by public opinion and by the United States media.

To what extent had the issue of human rights become simply some kind of political trend in US politics, and to what extent was publicizing the names of Soviet dissidents seen as a genuine tool to be used against the USSR?

We saw it as a genuine tool to bring leverage to bear. Less than a year after the signing of the *Final Act*, in 1976, a Republican congresswoman from New Jersey, Millicent

⁴ The Four-Power Agreement on Berlin (USA, USSR, UK and France) was concluded by the four wartime allied powers and came into force in June 1972. By reconfirming the responsibility of the four powers for the future of Berlin and Germany as a whole, the Agreement laid the foundation for a series of East-West agreements including in the *Helsinki Final Act*.

⁵ At the first round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in 1972, President Richard Nixon and General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev agreed that the political aspects of MBFR would be negotiated by the CSCE, while the military aspects would form the substance of the talks on MBFR between the NATO countries and the Warsaw Pact countries, to be held in parallel with the CSCE meetings. The preliminary MBFR talks started in Vienna in January 1973.

Fenwick, travelled to Moscow and met with the people we had already started to call “Helsinki monitors”. She met with Yury Orlov⁶, Yelena Bonner⁷, Natan Sharansky⁸ and others making up the Moscow Helsinki monitoring group. These people had basically told Millicent that it would be very positive if the Soviet leadership kept the promises they had made under the seventh principle⁹ and regarding the provisions foreseen in the third basket (concerning “co-operation in humanitarian and other fields”).

That would be of the greatest value to them, they said, because it would save them ... give them the opportunity to emigrate and to have contacts abroad. So when Millicent came back to Washington, she had a great idea to create a commission – a congressional commission or committee to make the communists accountable, to hold their feet to the fire, and make sure that they kept their promises. She introduced a bill to that end, which had to go through the Subcommittee on International Operations of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, chaired by Congressman Dante Fascell of Florida.

Henry Kissinger was totally opposed to this at the time. The State Department did everything it could to prevent this legislation from passing. The entire Eastern European diaspora in the United States backed the idea, so you had the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, the Joint Baltic American National Committee, the National Captive Nations Committee¹⁰, etc. ... all these organizations came together to lobby for the bill. It was a huge campaign. Nobody in Congress dared be against it, but Kissinger continued to oppose it.

I was later told by Max Friedersdorf (who was in charge of President Ford’s liaison with Congress) that Kissinger tried to persuade the President to veto the bill. But Dante Fascell, being as popular and as effective as he was, got the bill passed in Congress unanimously. Friedersdorf told me: “I had to explain to Henry that if it passed both Houses unanimously, a veto would likely be overridden.” So Ford let the bill become law without signing it, because you have a certain period of time where you can veto a bill and if you don’t veto it, it automatically becomes law. This was in June 1976.

So that was the genesis of the so-called “US CSCE Commission”?

Popularly known as the “Helsinki Commission”, yes. Dante Fascell was appointed Chairman. He approached me to ask if I would become the Staff Director, and set it



⁶Yury Feodorovich Orlov was a prominent nuclear physicist, Soviet dissident and human rights activist. He founded the “Moscow Helsinki monitoring group” to scrutinize Soviet adherence to the *Final Act*. In 1977, he was found guilty of anti-Soviet agitation and sentenced to seven years in a labour camp, plus five years’ exile in Siberia. He was deported to the United States in 1986 in exchange for a Soviet spy. Today, Orlov pursues his research in physics at the Department of Physics, Cornell University.

⁷Yelena Bonner (1923–2011) – a human rights activist and wife of physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov – was a co-founder of the “Moscow Helsinki monitoring group”.

⁸Anatoly Natan Borisovich Sharansky became a human rights activist and spokesperson for the “Moscow Helsinki Group” in 1976. He was arrested in 1977 on charges of spying for the United States and treason and sentenced to 13 years of forced labor in Perm, Siberia.

⁹The first part of the *Final Act’s* outlines ten principles guiding relations between the participating States. The seventh of these principles is: “Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief”.

¹⁰An anti-communism advocacy group established in 1959 and based in Washington, DC.

up. Although I had not agreed to become the Director, I went into Fascell's office a few days after our first conversation, and the bells were just ringing for a vote. You know – the bells ring in congressmen's offices and they all run out and get on the subway to go vote. So Fascell said: "Come and walk with me." So there we were, walking along the corridor, and I can perfectly remember John Buchanan, a Republican congressman from Alabama, stepping out of his office and Dante telling him: "John, I want you to meet Spencer Oliver; he is going to be the Staff Director of our new Commission." I was stunned, and when I opened my mouth to protest, he just said: "We'll talk about it later." Anyway, to cut a long story short, I agreed to take the job for a year to get it off the ground, despite a number of reservations.

There was a big push to appoint the required executive branch Commissioners. Again, Kissinger tried to prevent the State Department, the Government, the administration and even the President from appointing them. He also tried to have the Commission declared unconstitutional, because it had members from the Executive Branch and from the Legislative Branch, and in his mind, there was therefore a conflict under the Constitution. Of course, the composition was not unconstitutional because the Commissioners had no legislative power and no executive power, so there was no conflict of interest. They were supposed to undertake research and hold hearings, but they could not pass any laws.

Anyway, the Commissioners were not appointed until much later, when the presidential campaign between [Democratic presidential challenger] Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford was well underway. There was going to be a debate between Carter's running mate for Vice-President, Walter Mondale, and Gerald Ford's running mate, Bob Dole. So we prepped the Mondale people to ask why the administration had not yet appointed the Commissioners to the Helsinki Commission, which was of course a bit embarrassing for the Republicans, especially among voters of Eastern European origin.

They finally appointed the Commissioners because Ford made a foolish statement in the debate with Carter, declaring that Poland was a relatively free country, which caused a huge backlash. All the ethnic groups from the diaspora just erupted in opposition and pressed for this Commission to get started.

So the "US CSCE Commission" was born and its aims were to follow up on the implementation of the *Final Act*. How did you go about assessing progress?

Fascell wanted to take our Commissioners to Europe so they could talk to the people in the foreign ministries who had been involved in negotiating the *Helsinki Final Act* and ask them if what they expected from it was realistic. In other words, it was to be an educational tour. So, in November 1976, I arranged to take a planeload of Commissioners and US Senators to Brussels to start our briefings there and then divide up into separate teams that would go all over Europe, including to the Soviet Union.

We were supposed to go right after the 1976 US presidential election, but two days before we were supposed to leave, our applications for visas to the Soviet Union were refused, and within three hours of that, all the Warsaw Pact countries had also turned

down our visa requests. So, we went to Western Europe. We went to Brussels, where the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, Arthur Hartman, came over and briefed us.

My whole staff was assembled by that time; I had hired Alfred Friendly Jr. as my deputy. He had been Moscow Bureau Chief for the *Washington Post* and knew all the Helsinki monitors there. Guy Coriden¹¹, who had helped to negotiate the third basket, was seconded from the State Department. Meg Donovan came from the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and Martin Sletzinger was a Harvard expert in Russian affairs. Bright, smart people. Guy Coriden knew where every word in the *Helsinki Final Act* stood, and he knew exactly what the alternative words had been, as well as the arguments raised against them. So we went to Europe, and after Brussels, we split up and went in different directions. While Fascell and I went to Germany and then to Finland, where we met with President Kekkonen, Millicent Fenwick¹² and Senator Claiborne Pell¹³ went to Italy. Pell had hoped to go to Prague – he had been in the Czech capital as a young diplomat. In fact, he had been among the diplomatic staff that closed the embassy in 1948 – maybe even the last one out.

So, Paul Simon¹⁴, Millicent Fenwick, Claiborne Pell, Dante Fascell, the other Commissioners and staff were well briefed. At the same time, most of the high-level visits we wanted to have were blocked by Kissinger as soon as he got wind of them. When we wanted to see Willy Brandt in Berlin, for example, the State Department told us: “He is just not available and we’re really sorry.” And this is exactly where coincidence comes in. My predecessor as President of the NATO Young Political Leaders was a German, a socialist who had been Willy Brandt’s private secretary. So I called him and said: “Peter, can we ...” He was prompt to respond: “Yeah, sure – we can do that.”

So we met with Brandt and the State Department guys were just flabbergasted; they had no idea how we’d managed to get an appointment without the State Department intervening on our behalf. Then we went to London, and again, they wouldn’t let us see anybody of any consequence there. But by another coincidence, the British Foreign Minister at the time had participated in a Young Political Leaders exchange programme that I had organized in 1968, so I got in touch with him and he agreed to meet with us the day after. By then, Fascell was so exasperated by the State Department’s interference that he wouldn’t let anybody from our embassy go with us to meet the Foreign Minister.

11 Guy Coriden (1921–2011) joined the Department of State in 1962, where he became Director of the Office of European Exchange Programs, which arranged educational and cultural exchanges between the US and 30 other countries. In 1975, he became Director of the Department’s Office of International Arts Affairs, which sent American performing artists abroad.

12 Millicent Hammond Fenwick (1910–1992) was a fashion editor, diplomat and a four-term Republican member of the United States House of Representatives.

13 Claiborne de Borda Pell (1918–2009) was a United States senator from Rhode Island, who served six terms as a Democrat from 1961 to 1997.

14 Paul Martin Simon (1928–2003) was an American politician from Illinois. He served in the United States House of Representatives from 1975 to 1985, and in the United States Senate from 1985 to 1997.

Everywhere we went we talked to people who had been in Geneva and in Dipoli and spoke about their expectations for the implementation of the *Final Act*. When we came back from this trip we were well-prepared and well-informed.

That was late 1976 – more than a year after Helsinki. You had essentially conducted an opinion poll on how selected representatives in certain European governments felt about the implementation of the *Final Act*, and you presented the findings to Congress. But what about the Commission’s further involvement in the Conference itself?

The next scheduled CSCE event was the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting, which was to take place in October 1977. Initially, the State Department tried to prevent us from getting security clearances. So we went around them to the Department of Energy and got even higher security clearances – without their knowing about it until it was too late to interfere. We managed to get the Commission functioning and started having hearings, interviewing people, issuing statements, even passing resolutions on the floor calling for the promises made in Helsinki to be kept. After what we had learned, it became crystal clear that unless we were members of the Belgrade delegation, we would not have any influence on what was going to be discussed, negotiated and agreed at the Follow-up Meeting in Belgrade.

Cyrus Vance was named Secretary of State in December 1976, and since Fascal had strongly supported Carter’s intention to nominate Patt Derian as Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, he had suggested she become a part of the Commission as the representative of the State Department. Arthur Hartman then apparently called up Patt Derian, and coming across real nice, said: “You know, there is something about Cyrus wanting to appoint you to be in the Helsinki Commission. I don’t think you want to do that; you’re much too busy with the human rights stuff, plus this concerns Europe, so we can easily take care of it.” I had warned Patt of this kind of obstruction. She was a close friend of mine, whom I had worked with in the civil rights movement in Mississippi in the 1960s. That was another thing they didn’t know. So she answered: “Oh, thank you very much, but it indeed sounds interesting, and I believe I want to be on board. After all, the Secretary offered the position to me and I’ve accepted it. I’m in no way inclined to change my mind.” Hartman was very frustrated, but the stage was set for us to play a major role in Belgrade.

I had followed the CSCE through from the youth movement days to the negotiations in Geneva, to all the battles with Kissinger and Ford and through the establishment of the Commission. In Belgrade, Bud (Albert) Sherer was to be the head of the delegation (as he had been the head of the delegation in Geneva) and Jack Maresca was to be his deputy. I was to become Counsel to the delegation. Most of my staff were there too: Alfred Friendly, Meg Donovan, Sam Wise, Guy Coriden, and Martin Sletzinger. We went to Belgrade for the preparatory meeting in June 1976.

After we arrived, we found out that in fact there were two staff meetings being held every day, both called by Jack Maresca. Jack is a brilliant guy. I mean, he was the best guy on the delegation in Geneva and the best guy they had in the State Department for matters relating to the *Helsinki Final Act*. Nevertheless, he resented us being on that

delegation. He did not want a congressional entity to be integrated into a diplomatic delegation, so he treated us rather badly – by holding two staff meetings, for example. One was with all the State and Defense Department people, and then a second one, to which we were invited. I told him this was just not acceptable, that we had a commitment from the Secretary of State that we would be fully integrated into the delegation.

So we fought and fought, back and forth, until Fасcell called up Vance to tell him it was not working out between us in Belgrade. Vance then sent Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher (later Secretary of State under President Clinton) to check what was going on in Belgrade. He interviewed me and my staff, and then Maresca and his people. He said hardly anything (he was a very quiet kind of person), so when three days after he left we were told Maresca was being transferred to Paris, everybody was stunned – it shocked Maresca and Sherer, as well as the State Department. They were all furious because Maresca was their guy and they of course blamed me because they figured I had done him in. All we had wanted to do was to cooperate, to work together. I was later told Maresca had simply refused to have an integrated delegation, so Christopher had had to transfer him to the US embassy in Paris.

So all of this happened in Belgrade in the spring of 1977, during the preparatory meeting for the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting?

Yes. During the Belgrade preparatory meeting¹⁵ the Soviets had expended a lot of effort in trying to agree on a deadline, a cut-off date on which the review and all that should come to an end. We of course adopted the opposite position. The Follow-up Meeting was supposed to begin in October, but not only did we make no progress with the Soviets, but on top of it all, we continued to have our differences with the State Department about the general approach to the content of the main Follow-up Meeting – about how human rights would be handled and about how far we could go in voicing frank criticisms of the failure of the Warsaw Pact people to implement the human rights provisions of the *Final Act*.

During the recess between the Preparatory Meeting and the main Belgrade Meeting, a caucus or a consultation meeting between the NATO delegations was convened in Brussels. John Kornblum and I went there – Kornblum was there representing the State Department and I the Commission. This was a month before the main Follow-up Meeting was supposed to begin. I was in my room and there was a knock on the door. It was Kornblum. He opened the door and said: “I hope you’re proud of yourself, because what you’ve done to Bud Sherer is simply horrendous.” I asked: “What are you talking about, John?” He said: “You know very well what I’m talking about. Don’t say you had nothing to do with having Arthur Goldberg appointed head of the delegation to Belgrade.” I told Kornblum I had no idea what he was talking about, nor was I aware of what was going on in Washington. He said, “Well, the President has

¹⁵ The Belgrade preparatory meeting took place from 15 June to 5 August 1977, and the Follow-up Meeting from 4 October 1977 to 9 March 1978.

decided to appoint Arthur Goldberg to head the delegation at the Follow-up Meeting in Belgrade.”¹⁶

Well, we’d had no part in it, but the State Department was infuriated. I thought it was good, however, because I thought it would raise the level of public attention. I had met Goldberg before, but I didn’t really know him. When my father had been working within the labour movement when Goldberg was counsel for the CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations), he had a secretary called Fran Gilbert, who at one time had been my father’s secretary, who even babysat me when I was a child. Well, years had gone by and Fran had become Goldberg’s personal secretary in the mid-1960s, after he was appointed Associate Justice at the Supreme Court. And everywhere Goldberg went, she went with him. So when I got a call from her, I asked her where she was and what she was up to. She told me she was in Washington at the State Department with Justice Goldberg - who wanted to meet me.

So I went down to the State Department to meet Goldberg. I was waiting outside Goldberg’s office, the door opened and out came Bud Sherer. He didn’t even speak to me and walked right by. So I went into Goldberg’s office and he welcomed me by saying: “I’ve heard all about you, I’m so glad you’ve come, please have a seat. It looks like I really need your help here. These people at the State Department are not happy that I got this job. You know that fellow that just left the room? Well, I can assure you he is not happy about this at all. I told him: ‘Look, it wasn’t my idea to replace you, but I don’t think it’s a good idea for you to go to Belgrade as my deputy after you’ve been head of delegation.’” Goldberg told me that Sherer had then said that, since he had been confirmed by the Senate, he could not be fired by Goldberg and that he was determined to go to Belgrade as Goldberg’s deputy. Apparently, it was George Vest who had told Sherer he was to remain on board to protect the State Department’s interests.

So we had a situation where Goldberg became the head of the delegation to the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting and Sherer was appointed deputy head after having been head of delegation, both in Geneva and at the preparatory meeting, both Follow-up Meeting appointments having been confirmed by the Senate. So once again – all over again – we integrated the two delegations and we left for Belgrade. The Commission’s objective was to make sure that the Follow-up Meeting was a thorough and open and frank review. We intended to raise cases, to criticize countries and to make sure that the Meeting was a real review and not just a way station on the road to another anodyne document.

The State Department didn’t like this position, but Fascell had enough influence with Vance and with the administration to overcome their objections. As I said, Patt Derian, who was Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, was with us, and a few people at the top levels of the State Department were also ready to back us up. But

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¹⁶ Arthur Joseph Goldberg (1908–1990) was an American statesman and jurist. Under President Kennedy, he served first as Secretary of Labor and then as an Associate Justice

of the Supreme Court of the United States. President Lyndon Johnson appointed him US Ambassador to the United Nations.

above all, we had the support of Congress and we had Goldberg's support, which was of absolutely key importance.

Right, but what were your aims with reference to multilateral relations? Why did your involvement bother the State Department so much?

When we finally made it to Belgrade, it was our aim to have a thorough review and then make sure that there would be a follow-up to the review. We didn't care about agreeing on any other documents. The *Helsinki Final Act* was fine the way it was; it just needed to be implemented. That was exactly what the groups in Moscow and those that had signed Charter 77, among others, were telling us.

The main mechanism through which we worked in Belgrade was the NATO caucus.¹⁷ The EEC group was a relatively small group at that time. So to provide the ECC with an opportunity to work together in a multilateral way, we let them take the lead by agreeing that they would meet before the NATO caucus did. The NATO caucus was obviously larger (though it wasn't as big as it is now) – there were 15 of us at the time. All the diplomats in the NATO caucus thought that we should be a little more cautious about how tough we were intending to be. They thought that if we persisted in keeping the Soviets in the dock, as they said, then the Soviets would break off the discussions and we would be left holding the bag.

I told Goldberg this was nonsense and that they were not going anywhere with such arguments. I said: "The Soviets have taken credit for all of this – the *Final Act* is a 'great Brezhnevian accomplishment'. The *Helsinki Final Act* has been published in all their newspapers – in every country of the Warsaw Pact. So they cannot walk out on this. Apart from the United Nations, this Conference is the only place where they have a seat at the negotiating table and that is where they have to be held accountable." The human rights constituency in the United States – whether it was the Jewish community or the Polish, the Ukrainian or the Latvian – they were all counting on us to hold the Soviets to account for their transgressions and violations of the principles embodied in the *Helsinki Final Act*.

We had several different confrontations with the State Department. Sherer and the ambassadors in the NATO group showed their disdain for Goldberg, so of course, that just drove him more into our camp. I was apparently, (probably because of my personal history), the only one who could talk to Goldberg frankly and tell him he shouldn't do this or do that – argue with him, in other words. I had a great staff from the Helsinki Commission; we were way out ahead of everybody else, writing the speeches, making concise and to-the-point criticisms. During the opening sessions, nobody dared to mention any names or any countries or criticize them for breaching the commitments they had assumed in Helsinki. What we heard instead was: "There is a country north

¹⁷ The informal NATO caucus dates from the time when there were three caucuses in the CSCE: NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and the neutral and non-aligned countries. The last two have disappeared since the end of the Cold War. However, the

ambassadors of NATO countries in Vienna continue to meet weekly to coordinate views on issues involving NATO and international security.

of here and east of there and certain things have happened there which seem not to be in conformity with certain provisions or certain agreements adopted in Helsinki.”

There were a lot of journalists in Belgrade, like David Andelman from the “*New York Times*”, Klas Bergman from “*Dagens Nyheter*” (the Swedish daily) and Doyle McManus from the UPI news agency. And they told me: “We can’t write an article about ‘some country north or east of here’. You know, if you don’t use normal language and refer to specific names or countries, you won’t ever get to the core of public opinion, because nobody will know what the article is about – and if people can’t understand what’s going on, then no editors will publish it in the first place.” I told Goldberg about this and he told the NATO caucus that individual names and specific countries should be mentioned during the plenary.

You would have thought we had just ignited World War III! There were formal protests addressed to Washington from all the NATO countries, and ambassadors were coming in one at a time to talk to Goldberg personally. He listened to what they had to say (he was a very gracious man in that way), but he was also committed to making sure that the aim of holding certain countries accountable for their actions was achieved.

Altogether, we mentioned six names. We mentioned all the Warsaw Pact countries and the names of six individuals. Goldberg mentioned three, Guy Coriden mentioned one with reference to the third basket and I mentioned two. And every time we mentioned a name, there was an explosion. And, of course, our speeches were released to the press. The Soviets kept wanting to shift from reviewing the implementation of the provisions of the *Final Act* to discussing new proposals. For example, they had a proposal called “Platform for Security”, which they wanted to apply in the military field. We refused to go down that road and rejected their diversionary tactics.

So would it be fair to say that you went into Belgrade with the plight of the dissidents at the forefront of your mind?

That’s correct. They cracked down on people who had signed Charter 77 the day before the Belgrade Meeting opened, which was one of the reasons why we pushed the issue of freedom of speech as strongly as we did. Goldberg mentioned Charter 77 and Czechoslovakia and the press picked up on this confrontation right away. In the meantime, the State Department and NATO allies were ill at ease; they thought the whole thing was going to collapse. They came up with all kinds of new proposals: NATO proposals, EEC proposals, heaps of new proposals made by the neutrals. And of course, the Soviets tabled all kinds of new and unrelated proposals of their own. None of them could be agreed on. All we cared about was having a thorough review and agreeing to meet again for another review within a two- or three-year time span. That was our objective from the very beginning and we eventually achieved it. Many diplomats thought that the Belgrade Meeting was a huge failure. For us, it was a triumph. We got exactly what we wanted, but we were not the only ones who really thought like that – the human rights activists behind the Iron Curtain felt that way, and the journalists who covered the meeting wrote supportive stories.

How did the United States delegation make its position known to the public in Belgrade?

We handed out copies of our statements and we held press briefings after every meeting. Mike Hoffman was our press officer; he was a United States Information Agency guy and I did a lot of briefings with Mike where we told the journalists what we'd said, why we'd said it, and what the reaction had been from the other side. It was good stuff.

When we were doing this, we were getting an enormous amount of publicity, so the Soviets decided to try to match us. I was walking along one of the corridors one day and I saw three or four guys from the Soviet delegation standing there with a Russian diplomat named Evgeny Kutovoy, who was reading his statement to all the journalists gathered around him. But as his statement was so ridiculous, the journalists started walking away, because they were not interested in some kind of propagandistic speech they had heard a hundred times before. So the Soviets couldn't compete in that area. Goldberg was such a giant of a public figure that he could command a lot of attention with the media, particularly in the United States, because of who he was and the reputation he had.

What did the United States CSCE Commission bring to the review process at Belgrade?

You know, every day, someone somewhere was being harassed, or arrested, or thrown into prison. Now we had a forum in which to raise such cases, so we wanted to keep it open. And in the end, what we got from Belgrade was a thorough review, and the establishment of the precedent of naming names and countries, because, for most diplomats, this was a very distasteful process – they were used to being accredited to a country and not looking behind the façade, not questioning anything about the internal affairs of the country they were living in.

We wanted to establish the proposition that human rights and fundamental freedoms and the provisions of the third basket regarding the movement of people and information and ideas across national borders were the concerns of everybody. How a government treated its own citizens was everybody's concern, because the *Helsinki Final Act* contained provisions stipulating that governments had agreed to treat their own citizens in certain ways. And that was the issue we were raising.

Bud Sherer later wrote an article saying that Belgrade had been a failure. A lot of the diplomats said so too but, even though we hadn't agreed on any concluding document, for us it was nonetheless a great victory. And I really believe that Goldberg's courage and independence brought a lot to the Helsinki process. There had been many anodyne proposals and negotiations that were dragged out forever while human rights were being left behind and flouted and treated as they had been before the signing of the *Helsinki Final Act*, so something had to be done. For that, Arthur Goldberg was a great hero. In my opinion, he saved the CSCE from historic oblivion.

I think Belgrade was a solid achievement: Not only did it lay the groundwork for the Follow-up Meeting in Madrid, but it also established the Commission as a major player and it meant that the promises that were made in Helsinki would not be forgotten,

that we would be calling people to account for the way they kept those promises. I think it was a major accomplishment.

Moving forward in time, how was your delegation internally integrated in Madrid?

Well, the Commission had been at the heart of the delegation in Belgrade, and it was to be at the heart of the delegation again in Madrid. Our NATO allies said there were to be no more names mentioned, as they wanted to avoid having to deal with a repeat of the Belgrade Meeting. As the Madrid Meeting approached, the issue of who would be heading the US delegation was front and centre in the State Department. There was a big fight: Fassel told the administration that we needed a political figure, a politician – not somebody who was a career diplomat, to whom sharp talk about human rights was distasteful. We wanted a politician, a former senator, governor, congressman, cabinet secretary, or a prominent political figure.

The State Department wanted to nominate Warren Zimmerman, a career diplomat. The neo-conservatives wanted Max Kampelman. In the end, the President decided to appoint Griffin Bell, a good friend of his who served as Attorney General during the early years of the Carter administration.

The decision was for Bell to be the Chairman and Kampelman the Co-Chairman of our delegation to Madrid, (Kampelman became sole Chairman after the Reagan administration took office in Washington). Warren and I were to be Deputy Chairmen, so that the four of us were to comprise the leadership of the delegation. And then, of course, I had all my people in there, running the negotiations on the seventh principle and the third basket.

Meanwhile, Goldberg was still involved with the Commission. I think he called Martin and me and Sam almost every day – one or the other of us – always with some idea. One of the very important things that Goldberg did after Belgrade was to start the Helsinki Watch Committee in New York, which spawned a plethora of human rights NGO's throughout the CSCE area.

Let us return to the Madrid Follow-up Meeting – 1983.

There were some improvements in the Madrid negotiations, particularly regarding the third basket. Meg Donovan was really the one who was responsible for that progress. Meg – who later became Assistant Secretary of State – was a great negotiator, and she and Kai Eide (who was later Norway's Ambassador to the OSCE and then to NATO) and a number of others who were on third basket committees did a great job. We got down on paper some good language, which improved the Helsinki language in several marginal ways. We certainly didn't take any backward steps.

The Soviets got the Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE) in Stockholm.¹⁸ They had wanted a special security conference, so they got it. We got the human rights

¹⁸ The Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) opened in Stockholm on 17 January 1984 and lasted until 19 September 1986. This was to be the first stage of the talks known as the "CSBM negotiations".

conferences and expert meetings in Ottawa, Budapest and Bern.¹⁹ But the main thing we did was to agree that there would be another Review Meeting in 1986 in Vienna, and we nailed down the procedures, which included a repetition of the procedures we had for the Madrid Follow-up Meeting.

Of course, the time in Madrid was an exciting one. So many things happened during our time there: The declaration of martial law in Poland in December 1981, the ongoing Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and the shooting down of the Korean airliner by the Soviets at the beginning of September 1983. In December 1981, we were very close to an agreement on a final document, and people were tired – Max Kampelman wanted to go home, back to his law practice. By then, we had almost reached agreement. There were still three paragraphs that we were stuck on, but we were close to agreement on each. The final small group negotiations about the end of the Meeting were to take place in the suite of Franz Ceska, the head of the Austrian delegation, with Ceska representing the neutral and non-aligned. The three main negotiators were Sergey Kondrashov for the East, me for the West and Ceska for the neutrals. After the discussion we had in the NATO caucus, I knew exactly what we could and what we couldn't agree on. In other words, I had my instructions – you can give them this and you can give them that, but you've got to get this and that and only then can you call the game over. I was sure we could get agreement on that basis.

About 30 minutes before I was supposed to go to Ceska's suite, Max called me to tell me something was happening in Poland and since we didn't know what it was, we couldn't agree to anything right away – we first had to find out what was going on.

So I went to Ceska's room; I arrived about 10 minutes before Kondrashov, and I told Franz what Max had just said. Kondrashov came in – couldn't have been more friendly – and I ask him off the bat what was going on in Poland.

He replied: "Oh, I think there were a few water cannons, but nobody's hurt and everything is all right." I said: "Are you sure?" He said: "I assure you everything is all right. Yes, there were some demonstrations and there were some water hoses and so on, but everything is fine now."

So I said: "Well, I don't know about that, but let's get down to business. Now, on these things that we want, you have to agree to this and we have to do as I explained to you three weeks ago; we need to reach such-and-such compromises." He was taken aback and looked puzzled: "You dropped those proposals a long time ago, so why do you come back to them now?" I said: "We did not drop those proposals; we just held them in abeyance. But now we are at the end game and we insist on these concessions. Until we get them, we will not yield on any of the things that you want." Kondrashov said: "OK, we might as well end this meeting. You're obviously not going to agree to anything, and we will not go on endlessly with this. We've agreed to everything you wanted, but it seems that's not enough."

¹⁹ The Ottawa Meeting of Experts on Respect for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (7 May–17 June 1985); the Budapest Cultural Forum (15 October 1985–25 November 1985); and the Bern Meeting of Experts on Human Contacts (15–26 April 1986).

When we woke up the next morning, martial law had been declared in Poland. And that's when the position became clear-cut. We would not negotiate any further as long as there was martial law in Poland. This was mid-December, so we adjourned for a break until the middle of January. It was agreed by the NATO caucus, though, that, if martial law still prevailed in Poland by mid-January, we would come back to condemn it at the highest level and would demand that martial law in Poland be stopped before negotiations could continue.

So you got a recess for Christmas and during that time the CSCE participants were keeping their fingers on the pulse of what was happening in Poland?

It was clear right from the first opening plenary in January 1982 – most western foreign ministers were present in Madrid, and including Secretary of State Alexander Haig from the US. When they opened the meeting, the Polish representative was chairing and I was listening closely to what he was saying. He followed protocol and announced that, according to our schedule, the plenary had convened and would last until one o'clock and that he was pleased to give the floor to the first speaker.

So I jumped up and went to Max and said: "Max, he just said that this meeting will end at 1 p.m., and nobody objected. The way the rules work around here is that if you make a statement from the chair and nobody challenges it, it becomes a decision. That means they're going to try and cut this thing off at 1 p.m. And if somebody doesn't raise a point of order right now, they will cut off debate at 1 p.m." And Max said: "Spencer, I don't think this makes much sense. Maybe you'd do better to go to somebody else with this."

So I went over to Javier Rupérez, Head of the Spanish Delegation, who was sitting there next to his Foreign Minister, and I said, "Javier, here's the thing ..." He said, "I think you're right, but I don't know. Well, I'll try to talk my man into it." So he talked to his Foreign Minister, who said he would not do it because he didn't really understand the procedure. The foreign ministers in those times were reluctant to raise procedural points because they didn't know (or understand) some of the more complicated procedural steps.

I went to the Belgians, I went to Ceska, I went to the Germans, whose Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, could not understand why I had come to him. He said: "Well, why don't you get the Americans to raise the point?"

So the meeting went on. One o'clock came, the Foreign Minister of France, Claude Cheysson, was the next speaker on the list. He started to take the floor, and the Polish Chairman cut in: "Well, it's 1 p.m., gentlemen. The session is over, and the plenary will meet again next Monday at such-and-such a time." And that was it. The Pole got up and walked off the stage, while everyone started yelling: "The meeting has been adjourned? What is going on?" Well, it caused a huge furore, because half of the Foreign Ministers that were there had not yet spoken and they'd come all the way to Madrid and they would have to wait for another week to deliver their statements. Most of them left in a huff and did not return.

The position of the Western countries from that point on was that there could be no negotiation while there was martial law in Poland, which meant that we were not going to discuss any proposals. The idea was to take a break, though we did carry on for a week or two. We couldn't get any agreement on anything, though, while the Polish issues remained unsettled. That is when the Spanish started to panic because we were meeting in the *Palacio de Congressos*, across the road from the Bernabéu soccer stadium, where the soccer World Cup was to take place in the summer. So the Spanish thought that if we could not get a recess, we might still be occupying the headquarters of the World Cup when it started! Well, there were lots of negotiations back and forth, but nobody wanted to agree on anything.

In the midst of this confusion, I had an idea, which I presented at one of our staff meetings. I had noticed that Leonid Ilyichov, the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, who was leading his country's delegation in Madrid, never came to any meetings except the plenary meetings. He would stay at these from beginning to end; he never went to any other meetings and never left a plenary until it was over. So I figured: "What if next time we have a plenary, we just refuse to end it – we'll just keep him sitting there. The press outside will be tap dancing while the plenary remains in session and every time they try to adjourn it, we'll object, because consensus will have to be reached before the next meeting can be agreed on." I assumed that even if we sat there in silence, with the press just outside the doors, there would be a lot of talk about what was going on and what it was we wanted to negotiate about, and the Soviets would pay a heavy price for the continued silence because of martial law in Poland.

Max said it would never work and that he would not propose it. A couple of days later, he concluded that, since we couldn't reach any agreement, he would go home and tell the US President that we could not get agreement on a recess. So he went back to Washington. Two days later, I was approached by Ambassador Jörg Kastl, head of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, asking me about this idea. I was told later by Martin Sletzinger that he had shared the idea with colleagues from the German delegation, and that was how it had reached Kastl. Anyhow, while Max was in Washington, Kastl wanted to execute the strategy Max had rejected. I told them Max did not agree with this strategy, so someone else would have to put it forward.

To make a long story short, we went into the plenary, and when the speeches were finished, the Chairman declared: "Now we will agree that the next plenary will be ..." and I jumped up from my seat and said: "Objection! We don't agree to the next meeting." The Chairman responded: "Well, you have to agree to the next meeting ..." I said: "No, we don't. We don't have to agree to another meeting until we decide that we want to have another meeting. This meeting goes on until we reach consensus on agreeing to the next one."

So we sat there and we sat there. We sat there through lunch and into the afternoon and Ilyichov was still sitting at the back of the auditorium. There were no breaks, not even coffee or lunch breaks; we wouldn't agree on anything. So finally, Kondrashov came up to me and said: "What's the deal?" I said: "The deal is, I'm telling you guys to agree to an eight-month break or we're going to sit here all night long and all week long if necessary." I added: "You must remember that, outside this room, there is a flock of journalists and they will wonder why we are sitting here all night and all weekend with

no decisions being reached and nothing happening. We are going to tell them why: because of martial law in Poland.”

So he went back and talked to his delegation; I saw them caucusing. People were wandering around and we were just sitting there. Finally, Kondrashov came back and asked if they could have about an hour's break. I agreed, provided that at the end of that hour we would have an agreement of some kind to adjourn the session. He said he could not guarantee that, and when the hour had passed he came back and said that there would be no agreement to an eight-month break. I said: “OK, then we're still in session.” We started again. We went until early evening, when Kondrashov came back to me and said Ilyichov was ready to agree to something.

So I went back to the rear of the auditorium where the Soviets were sitting and their interpreter conveyed Ilyichov's message, which boiled down to the fact that they would agree to the break, but that they would not agree to it on that day. Monday would be the day on which they would agree. Now they wanted an agreement on adjourning the current plenary until Monday, at which time they would agree on an eight-month break. Finally, we broke up the meeting and agreed with Kondrashov that we would meet again on Saturday night to talk about the modalities for the recess, but we understood that there certainly would be an agreement.

I told the leaders of the NATO caucus of this arrangement and tried to call Max in Washington. He did not return my calls and I could not find him. I finally reached him the next day in the afternoon and gave him the scoop. He said it would never work, and he had already told President Reagan there would be no recess, but that he wanted to be on the phone in the evening if we were to agree on the preliminaries.

So we all gathered for the meeting, and at 7 p.m., everybody came. There were about eight or nine of us from the NATO caucus, but I don't think there were any neutrals and non-aligned there. Then Ilyichov made a speech about how procedural impediments made it very difficult to bring peace and security to Europe and how the Soviets would never agree to a recess without an agreement on their “Platform for Security” proposal; we were the ones who were blocking progress in the CSCE ... It was a typical Soviet speech. And I just said: “If this is the case I don't think we have anything else to talk about, Mr. Deputy Minister. We'll see each other on Monday morning.” They got up and walked out.

Just as we were about to leave the room, the phone rang and it was Max: “Well, is Ilyichov there? Can I speak to him?” I said: “Max, they didn't agree to it. I told you they were not going to agree until Monday.” But Max fell back into his initial disapproval: “I told you it would never work and I've told the President that we can't get a break on this. So you know, you're just wasting my time, Spencer. We're just going to have to leave a small group there and come back when the time is right.”

He hung up. Of course, on Sunday night, Kondrashov contacted me again and asked if we could meet before the Plenary at 8 a.m., together with the Bulgarians, the Poles and the Hungarians, about the recess business. So I said we would also have four or five representatives from the NATO side there. We got there and we were sitting in one of the side rooms across the table from each other. I made the proposal that we should

reconvene in November to continue the Madrid follow-up Meeting – a very simple formulation. A Hungarian spoke to the effect they could agree with that and thought we might suggest some seminars or expert conferences in between. We said no. The Hungarian, speaking for their side, agreed. Only Ilyichov didn't say anything, so I said: "I want to hear it from him. I want him to say that he agrees to this." He scowled at me, but he said that he agreed. At the plenary a few hours later, it was agreed to recess for eight months until early November 1982.

I arrived back in Madrid two weeks after the meeting reconvened. When I returned to Madrid, Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Kovalev (Moscow had replaced Ilyichov with Kovalev as leader of the Soviet delegation in the meantime) immediately invited us for lunch. Sergei Kondrashov approached me with an invitation for lunch at senior levels with the Soviet delegation. Max said: "Well, that's strange. I just had him for lunch a few days ago. Maybe they've got an answer from Moscow to my questions. So good, let's accept the invitation."

Before I continue, I should say that one of the things that caused quite a stir in the place was that Brezhnev had died during the recess and the son of Yury Andropov was a member of the delegation, and he happened to be in Madrid when Brezhnev died. So everybody had been trying to meet young Igor Andropov. They had been inviting the Soviets to lunch, dinner, etc., but Andropov never showed up. They would always have their number five and their number six, but never Andropov (who was number four in their delegation).

At the lunch hosted by the Soviets, I was seated next to Andropov and Max was sitting next to Kovalev at the other end of the table. Andropov explained this seating arrangement by telling me that the purpose of the lunch was to meet me. To my great surprise, he said we had a lot of mutual friends from the Young Political Leaders Exchange Programme, and they had told him that I would be in Madrid and that when he got to Madrid he should meet me because I was a good guy. This was the beginning of a relationship that proved to be very valuable in the end.

He stayed throughout the Madrid meeting. I got to know him pretty well as a matter of fact; he spoke good English. What I found out almost immediately after this lunch was that I suddenly became a very popular guy with people who had never spoken to me before (particularly a lot of people at the American Embassy – most of them working for the CIA). They suddenly all wanted to invite me to lunch or dinner. Finally, one day at a meeting at the embassy, I asked them what was it they wanted to know. And they told me: "Is his mother still alive? Does his father really speak English?" Things like that. So I said: "Well, just give me a list of your questions and I'll ask him."

And I did. I met with Igor and told him: "Look, all these guys in our embassy and probably everyone else wants to know some things about you and they've asked me to find out. Some of these are personal questions. Would you mind if I ask them?" He did not and so I asked if his mother was still alive. He laughed and said: "They don't even know that! There's not much to be said for your intelligence service, is there?"

This gave me a certain *entrée* into the Soviet side that was unique. And, you know, when we came to the end-game negotiations, it was very valuable. We got a lot of

references to human rights into the Madrid document because of Andropov. He was sitting in on the third basket, and of course, had great influence on the Soviet position.

After Madrid, the next CSCE event to come up was the first round of negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) in January 1984 in Stockholm.

The Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe – the CDE. The CDE²⁰ was the first major meeting after Madrid. It had been a primary objective of the Soviets to have a meeting on military security at some level. So the CDE was the kind of meeting they wanted, but it was very carefully negotiated beforehand in Madrid in terms of CSBMs and expanding the whole regime of these negotiations, but at the same time limiting the zone for its application to the Atlantic adjacent to Europe, and all the way to the Urals. That was one of the last points agreed in Madrid. It worked out pretty well in the end.

Even though I was a member of the delegation, I attended the meeting only periodically, for a few days each time. Jim Goodby was the head of the US delegation; he was an American diplomat who was very skilled and very active. Sam Wise and Martin Sletzinger were there for the Commission. Stockholm was generally a successful meeting.

Things were starting to change in the Soviet Union with Gorbachev's rise. Gorbachev came to power in 1985, but he actually consolidated his power at the Party Congress in February of 1986. Congressman Fascell and I met with him in Moscow in March, or the beginning of April, 1986. We were the first Westerners of any consequence to meet with Gorbachev. Of course, we focused a lot on human rights in our discussions; we spoke about democracy and dissidents. Fascell mentioned his desire to go and visit Sakharov in Gorky.²¹ To sum up, we had a four-and-a-half-hour meeting on a Saturday morning in the Kremlin. Gorbachev was very open; he indicated that things were going to change in the Soviet Union, that the country was going to move toward democracy and a market economy and that elections were going to be held, starting with Komsomol. It was a forecast of the changes to come. Gorbachev was very open and not defensive or aggressive in any way. I wrote a report on that trip for the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US House of Representatives; in it I wrote that if Gorbachev did all the things that he said he was going to do, it would be the end of communism in the Soviet Union.

I was on the delegation to Vienna, but Ambassador Sam Wise, who had been my deputy and was my successor as Staff Director of the Commission, was the main negotiator, worked hard on getting the commitments in the area of human rights included in the

²⁰ The Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe was convened in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Concluding Document of the Madrid Follow-up Meeting. The following stages of the CSBMs negotiations took place in Vienna in 1989.

²¹ Andrei Sakharov was arrested in 1980, following his public protests against the 1979 Soviet intervention in the Afghanistan civil war. He was exiled to Gorky (now Nizhny Novgorod), a major city on the Volga River, then closed to foreigners, where he was kept under tight police surveillance until 1986.

Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting. They also began to negotiate the *Paris Charter* in Vienna in mid-1989. And that's where the institutionalization scheme emerged – the idea of turning the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe into the *Organization* for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

We were quite worried about this institutionalization business. We believed (“we” being Fascell and I and the Commission) that the regularity of these high-level review meetings called more attention to the implementation of the provisions of the *Helsinki Final Act* and subsequent documents than a permanent bureaucracy would. So we actually opposed it.

One of the things that they wanted to create in Paris was a parliamentary assembly, as one of the four institutions of the CSCE, which had been proposed by US President George H. W. Bush at a NATO summit in the summer of 1990. The problem was, he hadn't consulted anybody in the US Congress about it. And there was an immediate reaction from senior figures in Congress, who said: “What are you doing, trying to commit us to an international parliamentary assembly without even consulting the Congress?”

The proposal was that, instead of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly meeting four times a year, it would meet officially only three times a year and the fourth time it met would be as the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly (with the addition of parliamentarians from those CSCE countries that were not members of the Council of Europe).

Of course, there were a lot of objections to that, particularly from the parliaments of those countries that were not members of the Council of Europe. They argued that they did not want to be treated as second-class citizens, and if there was to be a CSCE Parliamentary Assembly, they wanted it to be separate and discrete, as well as defining its own modalities.

Eventually, the State Department told their chief negotiator, Jack Maresca, that they couldn't agree to any proposal that did not have the support of Chairman Dante Fascell.

The last time you mentioned Jack Maresca, you said that your paths diverged after Belgrade. Did your work keep you in contact with him after that time?

It was a professional relationship. Yes, he was angry for a while about his departure from Belgrade, and I regretted it because I certainly didn't want him removed from the Belgrade delegation. I respected him professionally, and he got over the bad feeling. In any case, after Belgrade, we actually weren't engaged in the same sphere for a long time.

During the negotiations for the *Paris Charter*, where he had been appointed the head of the US delegation to the Follow-up Meeting, he hosted a luncheon for me, and he invited about 12 ambassadors, including some NATO ambassadors and a couple of neutrals. All of them very much wanted a parliamentary assembly to be created and were pressuring me to offer something that was acceptable to the US Congress.

The discussions went back and forth and back and forth. I made the point that there were already too many parliamentary assemblies, that a lot of parliamentarians didn't

want to have to be obligated to attend international meetings, that they didn't have time to attend anyhow and that they didn't want to sign up for an assembly that didn't do anything or focus on anything. They didn't want it to become political tourism and they wanted it to be inexpensive. Plus, if there was to be a secretariat to such a parliamentary assembly, I said that it would have to be small and also that the rules of procedure and other modalities should be agreed by the parliamentarians themselves.

These arguments went on through lunch. Finally, the British Ambassador asked: "What will you agree to?" So I reached in my pocket, handed him a draft of the *Charter of Paris* paragraph that dealt with the Parliamentary Assembly, and said: "This is what we'll agree to." What it said was that there would be a parliamentary assembly and that the parliamentarians would themselves decide on the modalities.²² And that very language was indeed what ended up being in the Paris Charter.

This lunch took place a few weeks before the Paris Summit and the signing of the *Paris Charter*. Jaime Ojeda, who was the Spanish Ambassador in Washington at that time and who had been in Madrid with us, said that the Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe González, wanted to invite parliamentarians from the participating States to come to Madrid as the guests of the Spanish *Cortes* to work out the modalities and arrangements for the creation of the CSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

But he wanted to make sure the Americans would come: "What I want from you is a guarantee that the US Congress will participate in this meeting in Madrid in the spring of 1991, if Felipe González issues this invitation." So I said: "Well, I'll get back to you."

And I talked to Fascell and he said: "Yes, of course." So we agreed: Felipe González extended the invitation in his speech at the Paris Summit, and in April 1991, we all came together in Madrid. We created a sort of drafting committee chaired by the Speaker of the Spanish *Cortes*; and then later at the staff level, there were several others of us who did the drafting for the rules of procedure. And we met several times after that first meeting, but eventually there was agreement that we would hold the first annual session in Budapest in July of 1992. We had agreed on the size, but because we couldn't agree on the distribution of expenses, we used the Helsinki "Blue Book" as the formula. So, these were the very beginnings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Looking back on those "institutionalization" years, and the meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials,²³ did you still believe that the CSCE was the right

²² See CSCE *Charter of Paris 1990* (before last paragraph of the part devoted to "New structures and institutions of the CSCE Process");[...] "Recognizing the important role parliamentarians can play in the CSCE process, we call for greater parliamentary involvement in the CSCE, in particular through the creation of a CSCE parliamentary assembly, involving members of parliaments from all participating States. To this end, we urge that contacts be pursued at parliamentary level to discuss the field of activities, working methods and rules of procedure of such a CSCE parliamentary structure, drawing on existing experience and work already undertaken in this field." [...]

²³ The Committee of Senior Officials, or CSO (later renamed the Senior Council), began meeting in 1990 in Prague (since that was where the CSCE Secretariat was then located), became the CSCE's regular consultative body in 1991, and exercised decision-making authority until 1994. It was responsible for the overview, management, and coordination of CSCE activities. Many of its political and decision-making powers were transferred to the CSO-Vienna Group, whose competences were in turn later handed over to the Permanent Committee, subsequently renamed the Permanent Council in 1995.

platform to try to contain any conflict that might arise, such as the one in the former Yugoslavia?

I think that the consensus rule in the new world was an anachronism. I mean, in the new post-1990 Europe, if they were going to change and reach agreement on all the language contained in the *Paris Charter* in order to eliminate a lot of the barriers they had had in the past – East-West cooperation and all those promises on human rights and travel and the movement of information – then they should have somehow adjusted the decision-making in the OSCE (or the CSCE, as it still was at the time). I don't mean a majority vote, but something like "consensus minus one" or "consensus minus two," which is what we did in the Parliamentary Assembly; we took our main decisions under the principle of "consensus minus one." We still do that on our Standing Committee when deciding on our budget. It makes a huge difference. But this is not an option on the governmental side – the only "consensus minus one" decision it ever took was on the suspension of Yugoslavia in 1992.

When the violence broke out in Yugoslavia, the OSCE held an emergency meeting in Prague to try to deal with it. And of course, the Yugoslavs had a veto, so they said "no" to everything they didn't approve. Consequently, there was gridlock – nothing could happen under these circumstances, so everyone went home. No decision was taken, and it took another year or so for "consensus minus one" to be applied, at the third CSCE Summit in Helsinki, on 9 and 10 July 1992.

I remain a little dubious about the whole business of the suspension of Yugoslavia. As I understand it, they were sentenced in their absence because the proposed members of their delegation were not granted visas to Finland for the Conference.

What other aspects of the CSCE's gradual metamorphosis do you think have been detrimental to the Organization?

Well, the thing that the Parliamentary Assembly has been advocating for years is some kind of adjustment to the consensus rule, given that no country is going to allow a decision to be made that's detrimental to its national security or impinges on its sovereignty in some way.

What we have been advocating is that the OSCE as a whole should use "consensus minus one" or "consensus minus two" or something similar to that for decisions that are not related to countries' basic national interests. All they talk about now is who is going to head a mission in a certain country or who will be the head of one of the other OSCE institutions, and they use the issue of budget approval as a weapon to get what they want. They also use the consensus rule to trade for jobs among themselves. They don't agree to consensus on the budget or on anything else until they get whatever it is they want, so it has become a trading bazaar for jobs and nothing else happens. In my opinion, the Permanent Council is an aberration. It was not even contemplated in the *Paris Charter*.

The OSCE in Vienna is simply what I call a bureaucracy that refused to die. There was a bureaucracy in Vienna that was created at the time of the MBFR talks and it smoothly evolved through the Vienna CSBM discussions and the negotiations on the *Paris Charter* during the Vienna Follow-up Meeting. But then, after the Paris Charter

was adopted, there was nothing left except for the Consultative Committee of the Conflict Prevention Centre.²⁴

In conformity with the *Paris Charter*, we started holding meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials in Prague. We would go there for a two-day or a three-day meeting and immediately start trying to negotiate a communiqué. We didn't really need a communiqué. We already had the *Helsinki Final Act* and *Paris Charter* and all these commitments, but the diplomats would try to negotiate a totally unnecessary communiqué reached by consensus. We could never agree. We could go on all night long and the Czechs would feed us dinner in the middle of the night, because we'd stay in the castle all night long, discussing (but not agreeing), recessing and going back into session ... but nothing ever happened.

Several non-productive meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials were attended by comparatively high-ranking individuals from their respective ministries who had travelled from their capitals. At least, that was true the first and second times the Committee met, but then, some of the people who had represented their countries in Vienna during the CSBM talks in 1989 reminded their capitals that they were still in Vienna and they could just as well drive up the road and attend the meetings.

So the next time they were in Prague and couldn't agree on something, there was a proposal from one of the guys from Vienna: "Well, since it seems we can't manage to finalize this communiqué, why don't we just form a Vienna working group, since a lot of us are there, and we'll prepare a document for the next time?" But the document they prepared instead was a proposal to create the CSO-Vienna Group – and eventually they proposed that they become the Permanent Council. So those 1989-era delegates perpetuated the system. And they're still there! When I go there now, I visit them in the same houses that they used to live in when they were attending the MBFR talks. It seems almost as though some of them have the same drivers and cooks they had in the 1980s.

When you try to negotiate by consensus behind closed doors, what can a journalist cover? The doors are closed, there is no written record of what's been said, and you don't know who's blocking what, because it's just a whisper in an ear in a corridor: "I'm not going to agree to this or that." And they are all negotiating over who's going to get the position of head of this mission or deputy head of that mission or whatever.

Considering that many of your colleagues from the Permanent Council have not served the OSCE as long as you, would you not say that this "loss of momentum" is due more to widespread political ill will among other European organizations? If so, what do you think could help improve this mood?

It's just a shame that the Permanent Council is dysfunctional. As parliamentarians, we in the Parliamentary Assembly want it to open up and review implementation of

²⁴ The Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) was originally established at the Paris Summit to "assist the [CSCE] Council in reducing the risk of conflict" (mainly of a military nature). However, further tasks were subsequently assigned to the CPC. It opened its doors as an independent office

in Vienna in March 1991, the first unit of the CSCE to be permanently based in the Austrian capital. When the CSCE Secretariat was moved from Prague to Vienna on 1 January 1994, the CPC was integrated into its structure. Today, the CPC is one of the main departments of the OSCE Secretariat.

the commitments assumed in 1975. Why not hold these reviews every week, instead of only holding them before each summit (as is the current practice)? Why don't they have a "consensus minus one or two" system in order to prevent delegates from blackmailing the chairmanship over acceptance of budget proposals or the appointment of mid-level diplomats? Why are Permanent Council meetings not open to the press? These are the sorts of things that need to be done.

Their attitude towards proposals like this when they are called on it is, as we say in Texas: "Well, yeah, you and the horse you rode in on can turn around and ride back out of town the same way you came in." They simply do not want to change the way they do things. Vienna is a nice cushy place for people who sit around and do nothing. I mean, as far as I know, there has not been a major decision adopted by the Permanent Council in many years. Sure, they decide who is going to be in the chair, they trade posts around and bicker about who is going to host the next seminar, what the dates of the Economic Forum will be, and so on. Basically, they talk about dates and jobs, but they don't really negotiate anything of any consequence or have a thorough discussion about implementation. Dunja Mijatović (the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media) speaks out and gets some attention and demands accountability when she appears there. But apart from her, it is a rare delegate who continues to make strong speeches every Thursday about problems with implementation, particularly of human rights provisions and the freedom of the press.

It's not just the 57 participating States that slow things down. For example, the European Union functions as a 27-member caucus (plus several associated members) and they have to agree on a statement before they can even say "good morning". Because of the financial crisis, many governments are now cutting back on their diplomatic representation all over the world. So they're double-hatting and triple-hatting their bilateral ambassadors. There are a lot of people now being sent as ambassadors to Austria and to the United Nations agencies as well as to the OSCE. The OSCE usually gets third ranking in terms of their priorities because the International Atomic Energy Agency has greater importance now than the OSCE, in view of the Iranian nuclear threat.

I believe that, if there were a Committee of Senior Officials that met two or three times a year, that would be enough, because meetings would have some focus and there would be keener attention paid in capitals, where the real decisions should be taken. Now, because of the nature of the Permanent Council, nobody in the capitals knows anything about the OSCE, so they leave it up to whomever they've got in Vienna. Basically, a lot of these people in Vienna continue writing their own instructions, so there is a real weakness. If you didn't have the Permanent Council and you had a section in each ministry that dealt with the OSCE and you had just a Ministerial Council or Committee of Senior Officials that would gather every three months or four months, then, when you did a review, there would be some attention paid to it at higher levels.

Assuming that reforms like these were implemented, can the OSCE, as the direct descendent of the CSCE, still have a role to play today?

Oh, sure – the OSCE is the successor of the original Conference. In 1975, it was the first time that voices were raised to say how important the way a government treats

its own citizens is, and that this concept should be part of international diplomatic discourse. Before Helsinki and the Follow-up Meetings after Helsinki 1975, nobody had officially questioned how a government treated its own people.

And this is how the big fight over interference in internal affairs came about – because of our criticisms. We won that battle, and now it is accepted that the whole world has the right to question whether or not you’re arresting your opposition, whether you’re jailing your opponents, whether you’re killing your own people, whether you have freedom of the press. All these things emanated from the Helsinki process.

So the foundation of the *Final Act* is still there. The key to real success is to maintain that foundation and to improve the structure that it supports today. The Parliamentary Assembly observes elections, and we organized the observations in Russia of the December 2011 parliamentary elections and the March 2012 presidential election. And we called them unfair and uncompetitive in the context of pluralistic elections. It hurts the Russians to be condemned like that on the international stage. Election observation acts as a tool for putting pressure on governments so that they do better and fulfil their commitments.

So the commitments that were assumed in Copenhagen²⁵ in 1990 on election observation and the conduct of elections are still important and we should care about them. And that’s one of the main areas where the Parliamentary Assembly can play an important role, because parliamentarians know about elections; they live and die by elections; they understand when an election is unfair; they understand when the election is being stolen. They can see and smell it, feel it. And so they are good judges and can be objective because they have references with which to compare and contrast.

This will be the test in the coming years: Will democratic elections continue to be held in the countries that have gone through the transition from communism to democracy or multiparty coalitions or whatever you want to call it. There are still a lot of major problems. In Russia, for some time you had almost the Wild West: 38 political parties, everybody running. This last time there was ex-Prime Minister and future President Putin running against four other people who had no chance because Putin’s people controlled the media and everything else. So you find that things are going in the wrong direction. And that is where the OSCE can show what it knows how to do: Prevent that backsliding, not only on democratic elections, but also particularly on freedom of the press, legitimate dissent and human rights in general. It can be and should be the forum at which we question how people can address their concerns and claim their rights.

Another reform that needs to happen in Vienna is that the Permanent Council needs to open up. It needs to be used as a forum to hold governments accountable in the court of public opinion – not just behind closed doors, but openly and decisively. So it is still needed. The struggle continues. To stop would defeat the whole purpose of the *Helsinki Final Act* in the first place.

²⁵ The Copenhagen Document (1990) is a key CSCE document that outlines commitments in the fields of elections, rule of law and other fundamental rights and freedoms and a number of other issues pertaining to issues with in the Human Dimension.

Would you say that the day-to-day workings of the OSCE do not arouse the same kind of thrill or excitement that participants in the CSCE process experienced?

Yes, that's so. During the Cold War, the confrontation between East and West and the effort to end the Cold War and to negotiate and to try to improve relations between the participating States was much more exciting and much more consequential. Now that's gone. We don't have the Warsaw Pact any more, and there are no military forces lurking on the borders of Western Europe. The military threat is gone and now it's more about economic cooperation. The human rights issues are still of consequence, but they aren't crucial the way they were before the ideological struggle ended.

At the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting, we engaged the Warsaw Pact countries in the ideological struggle – that's what the Helsinki Commission did. I said: "OK, here is the *Helsinki Final Act*. This is the difference between our two systems. You promised to implement these provisions and we are going to hold you to it. So if you want to talk about the ideological struggle, we're ready." And we went there and held their feet to the fire and we won the ideological struggle and years later their system came tumbling down – it doesn't exist anymore. The threat is no longer there. In the early days, going to the Soviet Union was an exotic trip. Now it's just expensive and it takes a long time and ... well, it works both ways. The Russians are all over the place: Cannes and St. Tropez and all those fancy places.



The interview with Spencer Oliver was conducted in English on the premises of the Prague Office of the OSCE Secretariat, on 25 April 2012, by Alice Němcová.



58.



59. (Left to right) Spencer Oliver, special Ambassador Griffin Bell, ambassador Max Kampelman waiting to be seated for the opening session of the Madrid Follow-up Meeting. (11 November 1980)



60. President Jimmy Carter congratulates Griffin Bell after Bell took the oath of office as Attorney General during a ceremony at the Justice Department, in Washington D.C. (26 January 1977)

Spencer Oliver

Spencer Oliver's involvement with the CSCE began in 1972, several years before he was named Staff Director and General Counsel of the newly-created Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (also known as the US Helsinki Commission), an independent government agency created by the US Congress to monitor and encourage compliance with the *Helsinki Final Act* and other CSCE commitments. He attended the Belgrade Follow-up Meeting as a Counsellor and the Madrid Follow-up Meeting as deputy head of the US delegation. He also occupied other senior positions during CSCE expert meetings in Valletta, Montreux, Athens, Stockholm, Ottawa, Budapest and Bern.

Mr. Oliver left the Helsinki Commission in 1985 for an eight-



year stint as Chief Counsel to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives, during which time the CSCE agenda remained among his areas of focus and responsibility.

In 1987, he was appointed Associate Counsel to the House Select Committee investigating covert arms transactions with Iran.

In 1989, he was Congressional Staff Advisor to the US delegation to the United Nations General Assembly.

Since 1993, Mr. Oliver has served as Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Copenhagen.



61. Head table of the Summit dinner-party held at the Presidential Palace in Helsinki: (left to right) President Gerald Ford, (interpreter), Prime Ministers Erich Honecker and Helmut Schmidt, UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, Presidents Urho Kekkonen and Josip Tito. (1 August 1975)



62. Even reproachful finger pointing could be taken with a smile once the Helsinki Final Act was signed. Minister of Foreign Affairs Henri Kissinger, President Gerald Ford and President Leonid Brezhnev.



63. While Chancellor Bruno Kreisky of Austria awaits his turn, President Gerald Ford signs the Helsinki Final Act. Finlandia Hall. (1 August 1975)



64. President Gerald Ford and Minister of Foreign Affairs Henri Kissinger; Helsinki. (1 August 1975)



65. Anonymous participant during stage I of the CSCE having found relief to the uncomfortable earphones.

EPILOGUE

“So time is getting shorter for revealing what remained unexplained ...”

Edouard Brunner

13 August 2002

Some ten years ago, Ambassador Edouard Brunner concluded his interview by voicing a wish: “[...] *there are mysteries of our recent history that have remained undisturbed to this day and they should be clarified. There are still living witnesses; so I would think that if a former Soviet delegate and a representative of a former satellite country, as well as an American and a European, including a Swiss, would be invited to discuss what made it possible to keep alive a process that had degenerated along the way, we would be very surprised at the answers we might get ...*”

While this Oral History Project was initially aimed to fill in some of the missing links we had identified in the CSCE/OSCE archives we maintain in Prague, the results of this venture seem in some way to fulfill Ambassador Brunner’s wish and prophecy. The number of potential witnesses mentioned by Ambassador Brunner was increased to nine, and for practical reasons, they did not all meet at the same time. Nevertheless, nine is a number that matched the factor of three: The three major like-minded groups involved in the multilateral making of the *Helsinki Final Act*. Therefore, we chose three representatives from each group: Ambassadors Iloniemi, Brunner and Saliba for the neutral and non-aligned countries; Mr. Opršal and Ambassadors Steglich and Dubinin for the former Warsaw Pact countries; and Ambassadors Andréani and Alessi, as well as the current Secretary General of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Spencer Oliver of the USA, to speak for the EEC allies and NATO member States.

These nine testimonies are presented here following a ternary structure, with a view to giving the reader an opportunity to perceive three general perspectives and nine different individual points of view of (more or less) the same facts (reflecting the chronological order of CSCE events from 1972 until 1989). At the end of each interview, the interviewee was asked to reflect on how he thought the OSCE currently fits into the network of European security organizations.

The structure of this compilation, as well as the sequence of the questions we had prepared for the interviewees changed and evolved greatly while we were assembling the transcriptions. In order to make sure that the amount of text reserved for each participant in the project was equitable, we had to make many adjustments and cuts. Consequently, the original transcripts and film footage, as well as the audio recordings captured for the making of the project represent quite a large collection of data, which has in addition enhanced our existing CSCE archive fond covering that period.

The complete set of these written and multimedia records are now available for scrutiny by any researcher interested in studying the origins and the fundament of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: *The Helsinki Final Act*.

Compiling this collection has felt at times like an impossible mission and a never-ending endeavour. But at the conclusion of this voyage in time, I believe that the message and outlook that the participants in this project shared with us were well worth the effort that went into bringing them to paper. It is my hope that these testimonies will not only prove to be a timely addition to the CSCE Archives, but will also provide a sound guarantee of the longevity of the OSCE's institutional memory.

Alice Němcová
Senior Assistant for Documentation and Information
and Research Coordinator
CSCE/OSCE Archives
Prague Office of the OSCE Secretariat



66. Results yielded by the OSCE Researcher-in-Residence Programme.

Original CSCE participating States and signatories of the *Helsinki Final Act* (1975)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Austria | 13. the Holy See | 25. Poland |
| 2. Belgium | 14. Hungary | 26. Romania |
| 3. Bulgaria | 15. Iceland | 27. San Marino |
| 4. Canada | 16. Ireland | 28. Spain |
| 5. Cyprus | 17. Italy | 29. Sweden |
| 6. Czechoslovakia | 18. Liechtenstein | 30. Switzerland |
| 7. Denmark | 19. Luxembourg | 31. Turkey |
| 8. Finland | 20. Malta | 32. USSR |
| 9. France | 21. Monaco | 33. United Kingdom |
| 10. German Democratic Republic | 22. Netherlands | 34. USA |
| 11. Federal Republic of Germany | 23. Norway | 35. Yugoslavia |
| 12. Greece | 24. Portugal | |

OSCE Participating States according to their year of accession (1991–1992)

- Germany (1990) (Successor State of GDR & FRG) (- 1)
- Russian Federation (1991) (Successor State of the USSR)
- Czech Republic – 1993 (Successor State of Czechoslovakia)
- Slovak Republic – 1993

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 35. Albania – 1991 (*1) | 49. Bosnia and Herzegovina – 1992 (*4) |
| 36. Latvia – 1991 (*2) | 50. Slovenia – 1992 (*5) |
| 37. Lithuania – 1991 (*2) | 51. Croatia – 1992 (*5) |
| 38. Estonia – 1991 (*2) | 52. Georgia – 1992 (*5) |
| 39. Armenia – 1992 (*3) | 53. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 1995 (*6) |
| 40. Azerbaijan – 1992 (*3) | 54. Andorra – 1996 |
| 41. Belarus – 1992 (*3) | 55. Serbia (successor State of Yugoslavia) 2000 (*7) |
| 42. Kazakhstan – 1992 (*3) | 56. Montenegro – 2006 (*8) |
| 43. Kyrgyzstan – 1992 (*3) | 57. Mongolia – 2012 (*9) |
| 44. Moldova – 1992 (*3) | |
| 45. Tajikistan – 1992 (*3) | |
| 46. Turkmenistan – 1992 (*3) | |
| 47. Ukraine – 1992 (*3) | |
| 48. Uzbekistan – 1992 (*3) | |

Also see inner side of back cover to locate the venue at which a State was admitted [*1–9]

ACRONYMS

ACYPL: American Council of Young Political Leaders
CD: Conference on Disarmament
CENYC: Council of European National Youth Committees
CIO: Chief Information Officer of the US Federal CIO Council
COMECON: (Transliteration of the Russian contraction for :) “Council for Mutual Economic Assistance”
CSBMs: Confidence- and Security-Building Measures
CSO: Committee of Senior Officials (CSCE decision-making body)
CSCE: Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
ČTK: Czech Press Agency
EC: European Commission
ECOSOC: United Nations Economic and Social Council
EEC: European Economic Community
EU: European Union
FRG: Federal Republic of Germany
GDR: German Democratic Republic
KGB: (Russian acronym for :) Committee for State Security
KOMSOMOL: All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (transliteration of the Russian expression: Communist Youth Association)
MBFR: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Europe
MGIMO: Moscow Institute of International Relations
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO: Non-governmental Organization
OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
TASS: Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union
UN: United Nations
UNECE: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
YMCA: Young Men’s Christian Association

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Time line 1972 –1991

-  The “Helsinki process”
-  Preparatory Meetings to Follow-up Meetings
-  Follow-up Meetings
-  Venues of a politico-military nature
-  Venues concerning economic and environmental issues
-  Venues concerning humanitarian issues
-  Venues concerning the CSCE Mediterranean region

1972

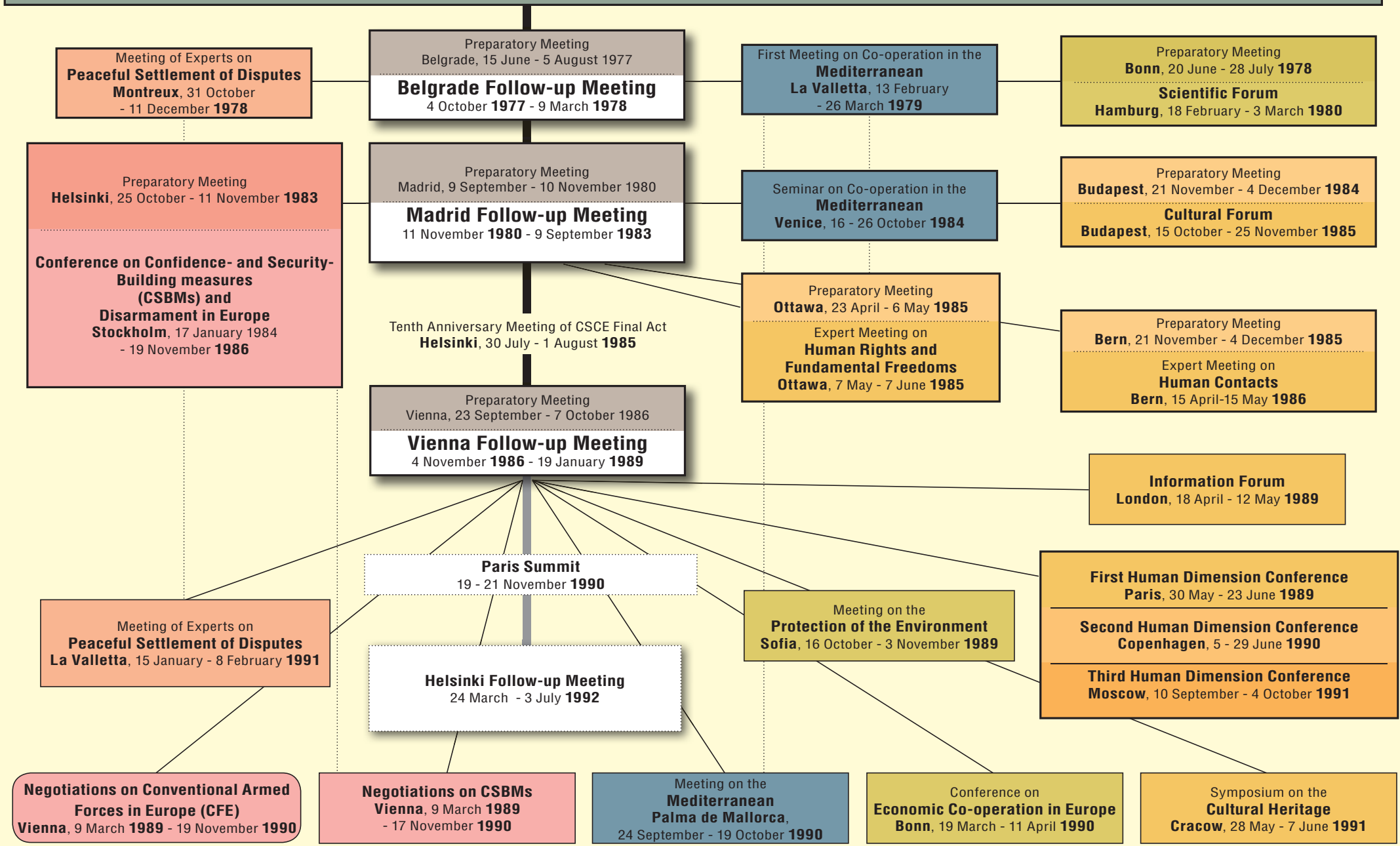
Multilateral Consultations
Dipoli
22 November 1972 - 8 June 1973

1991

Stage I – Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, **Helsinki**, 3 July - 7 July 1973
Stage II – Meeting of Ambassadors, **Geneva**, 18 September 1973 - 21 July 1975

CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

Stage III – Summit Meeting **Helsinki**, 30 July 1975 - 1 August 1975



Time line 1990–2012

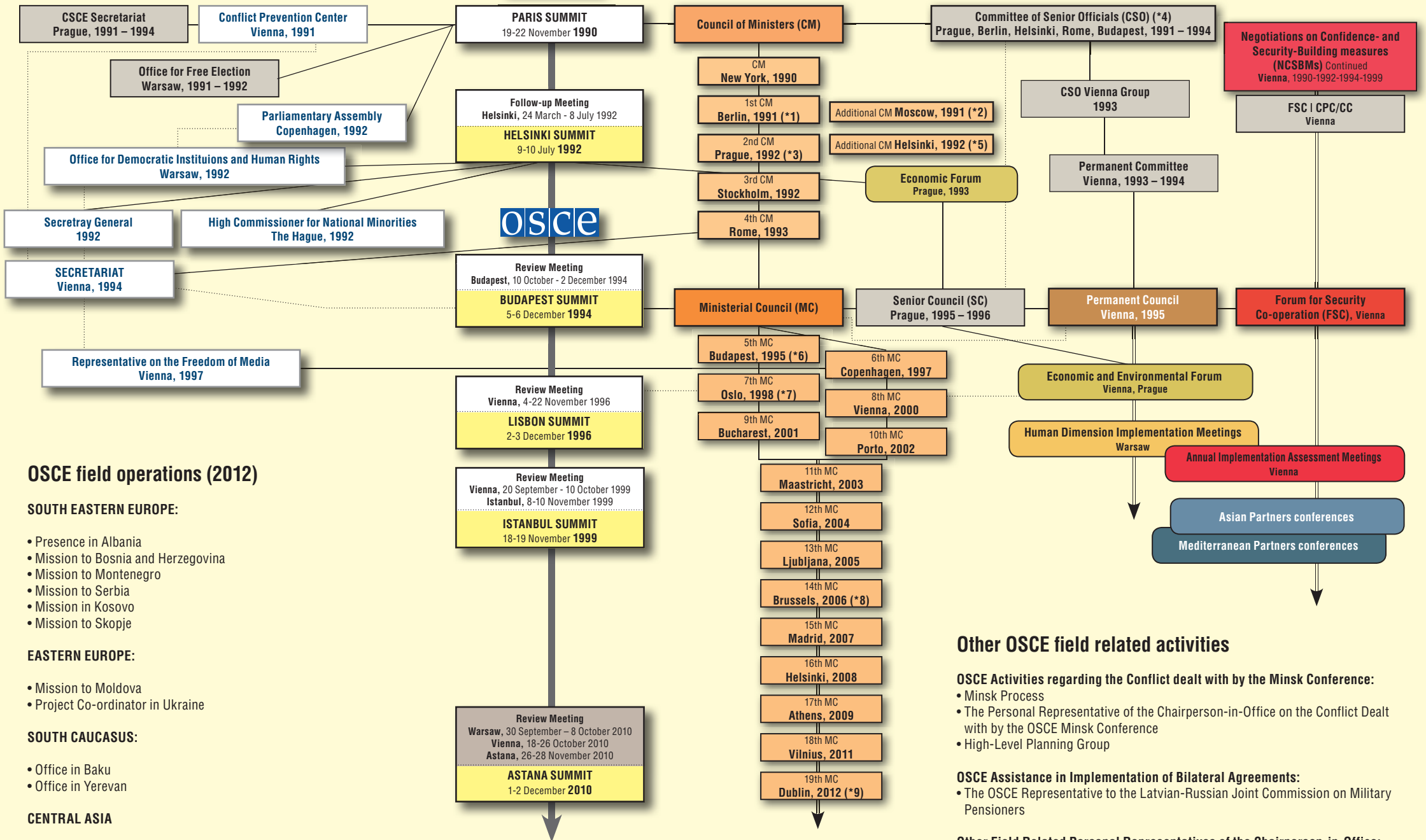
- Bodies no longer in existence
- CSCE/OSCE Institutions
- Follow-up meetings
- Summit meetings
- Ministerial Councils
- Economic and Environmental Forum
- Permanent Council
- Human Dimension discussions
- Politico-Military negotiations
- Activities with Mediterranean and Asian Partners for cooperation

1990 – 2012

INSTITUTIONALISATION PROCESS



NEGOTIATING AND DECISION-MAKING BODIES



* / Numbered events (1 to 9) relate to admission of new CSCE/OSCE participating States, the list of which is included in annex of this book.



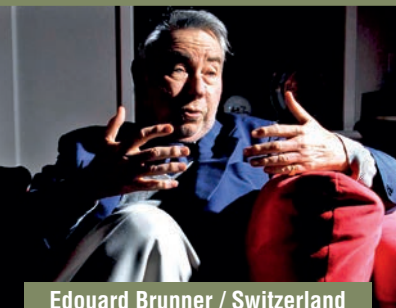
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Jiří Opršal / Czechoslovakia



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Edouard Brunner / Switzerland



Peter Steglich / GDR



Mario Michele Alessi / Italy



Evarist Saliba / Malta



Yuri V. Dubinin / Soviet Union



Spencer Oliver / USA



Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe