

ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT YELTSIN
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE CSCE SUMMIT

December 5, 1994

Mr. Chairman,
President Goncz,
Colleagues,

First of all, I wish to thank the Hungarian leadership for the excellent preparation of this meeting and for your hospitality. The fact that the summit is taking place in Budapest is a recognition of the growing role of the Central European countries in European politics.

Two years ago in Helsinki we reaffirmed our strategic goal of creating a common space of security and cooperation among democratic states. The Helsinki principles have stood the test of time. Today, they guarantee inviolability of borders in Europe and constitute the basis for coordinated actions in the interests of security and democracy.

However, let us honestly admit that our deeds are often at variance with adopted declarations. Having just rid itself of the Cold War legacy, Europe risks to immerse itself into a "cold peace". How to avoid this is a question that we must put to ourselves.

History proves that it is a dangerous illusion to believe that the destinies of continents and the world community as a whole cannot be shaped without certain one capital. Blocs and coalitions will not provide true security guarantees either.

Establishment of a full-fledged all-European organization with a solid legal basis has become a vital necessity for Europe. Russia believes that the basis for its activity should be the jointly developed "Program for Europe approaching the 21st century". In essence, it involves creation of an all-European comprehensive security system.

Present in this room are the leaders of 50 countries of the world. In terms of its scope and the potential of the participating States the CSCE is a unique structure. It should become a strong and effective instrument of peace, stability and democracy.

This path is not an easy one, yet it may not be too long. It would be right if two years from now, when we meet again, we discuss and approve a security model for the future Europe.

Now, how does Russia envision this model, as a country destined to be the Eastern pillar of security and stability?

The basis of an all-European security system could be a strong fabric of bilateral agreements on good-neighborliness and cooperation among the participating States in all areas. There is also a need for mutual guarantees to individual States or groups of States.

Russia is prepared to discuss guarantee issues on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

This is a foundation upon which all-European institutions could be created. Their goal would be dispute settlement and early prevention and resolution of conflicts.

The decisions we make today provide a good start for our joint work in the name of a stable and democratic Europe. I am referring, first and foremost, to the politico-military dimension.

For the first time, we are laying the foundation for a unified space of confidence-building in the military area, which encompasses a significant portion of three continents and the world ocean.

For the first time we are adopting a Code of Conduct of States in the politico-military area. It affirms an important principle of a law-governed State, that of democratic political control over the armed forces and their use.

Russia fully supports these decisions.

We who gathered here today in this room are very different, but we espouse common values and are committed to the same principles. Respecting the interests and positions of all States, Russia expects that her interests will be respected as well.

We in our country we are asking this question: now, for example, will the process of changes in the OSCE relate to the transformation of the existing

security structures? We are concerned over the ongoing changes in NATO. What will this mean for Russia?

NATO was created in the Cod War times. Today, it is trying to find its place in Europe, not without difficulty. It is important that this search not create new divisions, but promote European unity.

We believe that the plans of expanding NATO are contrary to this logic. Why sow the seeds of distrust? After all, we are no longer adversaries, we are partners.

Some explanations that we hear imply that this is "expansion of stability", just in case developments in Russia go the undesirable way.

If this is the reason why some want to move the NATO area of responsibility closer to the Russian borders, let me say this: it is too early to give up on democracy in Russia!

Let us not repeat past mistakes. No major country will live under the laws of isolation and will not play such a game.

Mr.Chairman,

Our best intentions to build a unified Europe will crumble unless they are translated into real actions.

Now, what should be the primary objective for the OSCE to aim at?

First and foremost, at assuring human rights, the rights of minorities, curbing aggressive nationalism. At present, these efforts are clearly inadequate. This

is acutely felt by millions of Russians in certain CIS countries and in the Baltics.

Infringement on their rights is manifesting itself in increasingly diverse forms. Thus, lately there have been increasing instances of restrictions placed upon the Orthodox Church in the Baltics, particularly in Estonia.

It is necessary that all CSCE countries abide by the spirit and letter of the UN Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious and language minorities and the CSCE Declaration on aggressive nationalism, racism, chauvinism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism.

The Council of Europe is playing an important role in ensuring human rights on the continent. The CSCE agenda contains the goal of making it a truly all-European. Russia's early joining the Council will contribute to reaching this goal.

An urgent task is to provide the CSCE with effective peace-keeping potential. We feel this need perhaps more than anyone else in Europe.

In the performance of its peace-making duty, Russia has an interest in sharing political and material responsibility for peace-keeping operations with our UN and CSCE partners, be that in Karabakh, Tajikistan, Georgia, or Moldova. But of course this should be without detriment to the effectiveness of the operations.

The OSCE ought to have an important say in matters concerning strengthening of borders and territorial integrity of the participating States. Attempts to revise the fundamental Helsinki principles can cost very dearly to our continent.

Europe will truly become unified when it creates a common all-European economic space. We are moving in this direction. The membership of the European Union is expanding. Russia and the European Union have recently made a step toward each other by concluding the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation. It would be in our common interest to make it truly effective.

It is time to involve Mediterranean countries in all-European cooperation. Progress made in the Middle East settlement opens up new possibilities for this.

Reliability of the OSCE will depend on an interaction pursued in common interests between all European organizations and forums - the CIS, NATO, WEU, EU, the Council of Europe and others.

The Commonwealth of Independent States is playing an increasing role in the life of Europe. We have no intention of creating a new bloc within the CIS, which would be in confrontation to anyone. As Chairman of the Council of the CIS Heads of State I declare that the OSCE principles underlie the CIS Charter. All matters relating to integration within the CIS are dealt with in strict compliance with them. The Commonwealth will continue to strengthen. This is what our people want. This is the primary condition of stability not only in

the East of Europe, but in the entire European continent.

Mr. Chairman,

Esteemed Leaders of the CSCE participating States,

The year 1993 will mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. Now, after half a century, we are becoming increasingly aware of the true meaning of the Great Victory - the need for historic reconciliation of Europe. There must never be enemies, the victors or the vanquished on the continent.

For the first time in its history our continent has a real chance to achieve unity. To miss that chance is to forget the lessons of the past and call into question the future itself.

The memory of the dead and the life of succeeding generations require from us supreme responsibility. Let us measure up to our duty.