

Mr. George VASSILIOU (President of the Republic, Cyprus):

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I should like to express my thanks to the people and Government of France for hosting this historic Summit and particularly to President Mitterrand whose recognized abilities and attachment to European ideals made it such a success.

This Meeting marks the end of an era in European history. It is the point of confluence of those forces that set motion the breathtaking sequence of events which swept away the order that reigned in Europe for 45 years now.

In the course of a year the confrontation line in the heart of our continent, the division of Europe and the heritage of the cold war became things of the past, rendering well-established concepts and attitudes meaningless. We express our gratitude to President Gorbachev for his vision for a new Europe and to President Bush for helping to make it a reality.

Like all Europeans, we Cypriots share with the German people their joy and enthusiasm for the unification of their country, for we can understand what the longing for unification means, living as we do in a divided homeland.

However, just as the owl of Minerva flying out at dusk brings wisdom, this Meeting, coming after the uproar of joy at the developments has settled down, presents us with a rare opportunity for reflection.

As we leave behind us the dangerous and long-lasting stability imposed by the East-West confrontation and the cold war which did set limits to the behaviour of individual countries, given the terrifying potential of a "hot confrontation", a vacuum is left in the security structure of Europe.

Security, like nature, abhors a vacuum. Europe needs today a collective security system adapted to the conditions of a multipolar world and providing equal security for all. Without such a system our

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continent, but particularly small States, could be left at the mercy of all kinds of opportunists who might be tempted to find a way out of self-created difficulties through intimidation, coercion or aggression.

I do not think that it is a coincidence that the invasion of Kuwait, a small country, took place at this particular moment. We condemn Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. The whole world, this time, was able to stand up against aggression. This is why Iraq will fail because we fully agree that aggression must never pay. We feel particularly intensely about aggression for we had ourselves the dramatic experience of an invasion by a much stronger neighbour.

Mr. Chairman, the need for a collective security system governed by the principles of the Helsinki Final Act becomes more pressing as Europe faces already new challenges that generate instability and carry a heavy potential for conflict. The resurgence of chauvinistic nationalism, manifestations of which are already evident in parts of Europe will, I believe, constitute one of the major challenges we will have to confront in the coming years.

It is a basic misconception of nationalists that the identity, well-being and safety of an ethnic group can only be assured within the narrow confines of homogeneity and always to the detriment of other groups.

We Cypriots, as many other Europeans, have experienced what extreme nationalism can bring in terms of suffering, destruction and destitution, and this accounts also for our extreme concern in this matter.

Chauvinists, whatever their proclaimed aims and intentions, engage in a road the outcome of which is the negation of human rights and those values, the dignity of the human person, tolerance and freedom which form our common European humanistic heritage.

Diversity and the creative contact of human groups accounts for the vitality of our European civilization and have always constituted the major source of change and progress.

As many countries in Europe have proved, such an achievement becomes possible only through meticulous respect for the human rights and freedoms of the individual citizen.

The rules and principles of the Helsinki process, and our achievements in the field of the human dimension, constitute a valuable contribution towards the attainment of this objective.

The need to safeguard human rights as an essential component of security and the interrelationship between security, human rights and economic development has been a major source of strength of the Helsinki process which we must preserve and extend in our drive towards integration.

The accomplishments of the human dimension of the CSCE have been spectacular and a source of justified satisfaction for all of us. Democracy and respect for human rights are now within reach of all Europeans. We must praise here the contribution of the Council of Europe in this field, commend its experience and recommend that we should take full advantage of its organizational capabilities.

It is, also, of the utmost importance and an expression of our commitment and faith in European solidarity and unity that we intensify our efforts towards economic co-operation in all fields and in order to create the conditions for self-sustainable development in the Central and Eastern European countries that will render these societies and their economies an integral part of the European one. In this world of interdependence we must not forget, however, that the future prosperity of Europe can only be assured if the prosperity of the developing world is also assured.

Mr. Chairman, the CFE Treaty signed yesterday and the envisaged enlargement of future negotiations to cover all CSCE States as well as the outcome of the CSEM negotiations constitute important first steps towards enhanced security. By ensuring that on the road to security no country will benefit at the expense of any other and by enhancing

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openness in the field of military activities they create the dynamics for the establishment of a European security system providing equal security for all.

We must give further thought to the parliamentary dimension of the CSCE. Its development will give additional impetus to the unit for observing elections until democratic pluralism is established throughout Europe.

Cyprus has been throughout its history a European outpost in the Mediterranean and knows how closely the security of Europe is linked to security in the Mediterranean. We attach, therefore, great importance to the process of improving security in this region through the establishment of a Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean and strongly support consultations with all qualifying States to this end.

In addition to the positive developments in the field of disarmament, our concerted effort rendered possible the creation of the Conflict Prevention Centre as a modest but valuable contribution to the field of security with the potential of becoming the major institution for the peaceful settlement of disputes and thus of peace and stability in Europe.

The reconstruction of a security system adapted to the conditions and needs of a reunited Europe requires also that we turn our attention to the peaceful resolution of the outstanding conflicts in Europe. The Cyprus problem, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations said yesterday, is one European problem the solution of which is long overdue.

For Cyprus cannot remain an anachronism in Europe, the only European country facing occupation by a foreign army, with its citizens denied the exercise of their fundamental freedoms and rights, even the freedom of movement and the enjoyment of property and its demographic structure altered through the massive implantation of settlers.

Mr. Chairman, we will renew tomorrow our commitment to the Ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act. We will reaffirm our pledge to respect the fundamental freedoms and rights of the individual and our commitment to respect international law and comply with our obligations arising from the Charter of the United Nations. The application of these very principles in the case of Cyprus will render the Cyprus problem a thing of the past. I should, therefore, like to appeal to all participating States to make this possible and to call on Turkey to prove faithful to its commitments to the Helsinki principles. We firmly believe that the solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of the Helsinki principles will be a lasting contribution towards the consolidation of peace and security in Europe.

Mr. Chairman, the challenge for us now is no longer to overcome the division of Europe, but to strengthen its unity and security, through co-operation, and lay the foundations for what President Gorbachev called the "common European home" and President Mitterrand described as the "European Confederation".

The realization of European unity is today necessary and possible. It demands from all of us that we assume our share of responsibility knowing that our effort has a universal significance and transcends the confines of Europe.