

**Address by West German Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Dietrich Genscher
on the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act
Helsinki, 1 August 1985**

Mr. President, distinguished Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, now as we once again enjoy Finland's hospitality and that of its beautiful capital city, the capital city whose name has become synonymous with the CSCE process throughout the world, we are confronted by two questions. Did we take the right road ten years ago, and where do we go from here?

1 August 1975 was preceded by the treaties concluded by my country with the Soviet Union, the Polish People's Republic, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and with the German Democratic Republic. The quadripartite agreement on Berlin had been concluded and the United States of America and the Soviet Union had recognized in their 1972 declaration the political link between mutual recognition of their equal rights and consideration of each other's security interests as well as the obligation to practise restraint and to refrain from seeking unilateral advantages at the expense of the other side. On the western side our policy was governed by the principles of the Harmel Report which, as at that time, is valid today. The Federal Government stands unreservedly by the treaties of Moscow, Warsaw and Prague, concluded in the seventies and by the treaty on the basis of relations with the German Democratic Republic, by the quadripartite agreement on Berlin, which must be strictly observed and applied in full by everyone, everywhere, under all circumstances.

Since 1975 my country has again and again injected fresh impetus into the CSCE process and has emphatically insisted on observance of the obligations undertaken in the Final Act.

We have in doing so acted in awareness of the fact that a climate of confrontation would be of most harm to the Germans in the heart of Europe. We know that the Germans in the German Democratic Republic share this view, which was most recently expressed in the statement made by the Federation of Protestant Churches on 28 July 1985 and we know that we share with the leaders of the German Democratic Republic a common awareness of the responsibility of the two German States for peace in Europe.

Experiences of confrontation and a sober assessment of the common advantages to be gained by dialogue and co-operation made the Final Act possible. It is a realistic and balanced document but it is not a blueprint for Utopia. It is based on realities, to which belong the presence and political role of the United States of America and Canada on our continent just as much as the existence of differing systems of governments, society and values in Europe.

The Final Act is not a peace treaty, but rather a programme charting the future course towards a peaceful order in Europe. The Final Act reaffirms basic principles such as that of human dignity and the self-determination of peoples. It acknowledges the objective of a genuine and lasting peace among the nations. It embodies dynamic principles such as peaceful change, the effort to bring about development, co-operation and improvement in human contacts. The commitment to a peaceful process of change also raises prospects of a future state of peace in Europe, in which the German nation will regain its unity in free self-determination as the aim declared by us on concluding the treaties. The Final Act takes account of the twofold realization that the improvement of relations between governments benefits people, but that intergovernmental relations can only be lastingly improved if the good of the individual is incorporated into this development. History will not judge the value of the Final Act by its

creation and adoption but by what the process that it initiated has done for the life of the nations, for peace and for the fundamental rights of every individual person.

The CSCE has not reversed the division of Europe that occurred after 1945, but the aim of the Final Act, as declared in the name of the supreme political authorities in the participating States, namely that of overcoming confrontation in Europe, is in line with the hopes and sentiments of the people, who continue to regard Europe as an entity. These sentiments are stronger than walls and prohibitions.

Common history and a common culture unite all Europeans. Awareness of the European identity is constantly growing. Our policies too, must reflect this development.

The CSCE process must maintain its dynamism. It can only make progress if all of its elements are fostered by all participating States. Anyone trying to curb individual parts of it risks denying himself its longer-term benefits.

Fulfilment of the Final Act demands of some more than of others that they adjust their normal practice. But at a time of rapid change, on the threshold of a new industrial revolution, of the transition to the information age, willingness to change structures in the very areas where they were previously immobile also opens the door to progress and success.

One of the driving forces of the CSCE process is the fact that it weds the long-term interests of each participating State to the future fate of Europe. Its success, however, is not automatically guaranteed. Each participating State bears responsibility for the progress of the process in its entirety. The CSCE follow-up meeting in Madrid resulted in the CSCE process being more precisely defined and enlarged. The CDE in Stockholm is intended to combine in a practical way the political and military aspects of peacekeeping in Europe.

Economic exchanges between West and East in Europe have multiplied. Many people have been allowed to emigrate and travel from West to East and vice versa has been facilitated. The work opportunities for journalists have been broadened. Cultural encounters between West and East have begun to activate more of the great latent potential of the common history and culture of the European peoples.

It is natural that what counts most to us Germans should be the development of West-East relations at the heart of Europe. As part of the joint efforts of the CSCE participating States to remove barriers in Europe we are striving to alleviate by means of practical action the hardship deriving from the partition of our country. The constant friction that once marked relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic and disturbed the international climate has given way to recognition of a shared responsibility, which constitutes a joint German contribution to stability in Europe.

This also includes the treatment of humanitarian issues. We acknowledge the improvements and progress made in the fields of family reunification and travel. In the joint statement made by Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Erich Honecker, Chairman of the German Democratic Republic Council of State, in Moscow on 12 March 1985, it was emphasized "that progress in our mutual relations for the good of the people is a very suitable means of improving the political climate and building confidence in West-East relations".

Ladies and Gentlemen, we shall continue our efforts to give substance our relations with the German Democratic Republic, within the relationship between the two German States, to fulfil the undertakings of the CSCE Final Act to an exemplary degree. The efforts made by both German States to achieve stability at the heart of Europe merit encouragement of all CSCE participating States in the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act.

Mr. Chairman, the rights and freedoms deriving from the dignity of man are among the essential principles of the charter of our co-existence laid down in Helsinki. In the Madrid Concluding Document we underlined our legitimate right to discuss amongst ourselves the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all their aspects. In doing so, we do not exclude human rights in the social and economic fields. In this area too, we can stand comparison, but respect for the inalienable freedoms of the individual is essential if he is to be able to assert his economic and social rights vis-à-vis the government. Indeed, it is the prerequisite of genuine domestic and international peace.

Despite the progress made in many areas, the CSCE Final Act and the Madrid Concluding Document are not being satisfactorily fulfilled in many respects. The use of force, violations of human rights, obstruction of human contacts and setbacks in the fields of emigration and reunification families, a lack of religious tolerance and disregard of the rights of ethnic minorities oppress people, burden international relations and cause a great deal of concern . We do not and shall not remain silent when human rights are infringed.

We shall not look the other way when people, the many nameless as well as those well-known have to suffer persecution and unfair treatment for invoking the promises made in the Final Act. For the people in all our countries security and co-operation mean above all that they can exercise their human rights and cultivate their human contacts across national frontiers.

The flow of goods, services and energy between European countries has multiplied in recent decades. In only a few hours one can travel from one end of the continent to the other. But innumerable, countless numbers of people are still unable to meet each other. It is technically possible to telephone all corners of the globe from one's living room and to receive television pictures from all continents, but the free flow of information between Europeans in West and East is still not guaranteed. It is a priority task for the participating States to find a remedy and to do justice to the spirit and letter of the Final Act.

The fulfilment of obligations entered into is an important factor in building confidence between States. The right to leave one's own country for ever, but also the right to return there at any time, is a case in point. We are saddened by the sharp decrease in the issue of exit visas by some countries to persons wishing to emigrate. I repeat our expectation, expressed by Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl during his visit to Moscow in 1983, that the former, more positive approach will be resumed. At issue here too, is the credibility of the CSCE process. The behaviour of a government towards its own citizens, towards citizens of a different ethnic origin, within its country and towards its neighbours is an important factor conditioning the elimination of threat perceptions harboured by other countries. Nowhere, other than in its respect for human rights, can a country signal so rapidly and convincingly its genuine desire to improve the international situation and to promote international peace.

What is to prevent us, as a proof of our good faith, from committing ourselves to republishing the Helsinki Final Act and to combining such publication with an assurance by every signatory State that invocation of the Final Act will not be held against anyone? What is to prevent us from supporting the two French proposals, namely that a conference on reunification of families be arranged and that a decision be taken to apply strictly in all countries the right of any person to leave his own country, a right embodied in the Final Act but still subject to restriction in many States. The Federal Government, in endorsing all parts of the Final Act, is prepared to support these proposals with their direct impact. That can be done here in Helsinki, or it can be done in Vienna in 1986. No Government should lack the confidence in itself and in its citizens that is needed to make the same declaration.

For the military aspects of security, the participating States in Helsinki took as their basis the close link between peace and security in Europe and in the world as a whole. They reaffirmed their commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

A constant policy, geared to the principles of the CSCE Final Act, is essential if our common interest in the elimination of threats and the reduction of arms expenditure is to be asserted. Confidence in the field of security is also a prerequisite for more intensive co-operation in the field of technology. We do not want a technological division of Europe, but we cannot ignore the connection between technology and the threat.

The CSCE Final Act is based on the principle that all of Europe has an equal and indivisible right to security and that no country has a claim to a higher security status than the others. The prohibition of force reaffirmed in the Final Act implies that no country can ever use its weapons, be they nuclear or conventional, except in response to attack. Only if we act in accordance with these principles can our peoples live in true and lasting peace, free from any threat to or attempt against their security. In this connection, a particularly heavy responsibility falls to countries with large arsenals. But all countries, large or small, are called upon in the spirit of the CSCE to work for the establishment of a true and lasting peace.

In the nuclear age reliable security can no longer rest solely on autonomous security efforts. These must be reinforced by serious efforts to reach co-operative arms control and disarmament solutions, taking account of the legitimate security interests of all concerned.

In this context, particular importance accrues to the US-Soviet negotiations in Geneva. The US-Soviet agreement of 8 January 1985 lays down far reaching negotiating aims, which have our unmitigated support. These aims include fundamental elements of a system of co-operative peacekeeping. One of these aims is to prevent an arms race in space and to terminate it on earth, to limit and reduce nuclear arms and to strengthen strategic stability. An important point is that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed that the three subjects of negotiation — space and nuclear arms, both strategic and intermediate range — are to be resolved in their interrelationship. The planned meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev is what all nations have been hoping for.

In Stockholm we want to create greater trust by means of increased openness and hence increased calculability. Openness and transparency must not remain a prior concession by one side. It is impossible that anybody with anything to hide should be disadvantaged by an increase in transparency. Distrust and mistrust and threat cannot be eliminated by fine words alone. Here too, it is deeds that count. In Stockholm, true to the conference mandate, we want

to agree on concrete and substantial confidence- and security-building measures. We are prepared to reaffirm solemnly the existing international ban on force itself in conjunction with such measures as serve to define the ban more precisely. This ban must be valid everywhere and vis-à-vis everyone.

Mr. President, the balance sheet from ten years of CSCE produces a mixed picture. The balance sheets drawn up here do not tally with each other. But so far no participating State has said that it is not interested in continuing the process. On the contrary, all of them have underlined its importance and the need for it. Indeed there is no alternative, in spite of unquestionable disappointments and setbacks. For the Federal Republic of Germany, the statement made by the German Bundestag on 14 January 1982 in a unanimously adopted resolution is still valid and I quote:

"The German Bundestag reaffirms its belief that today's international situation makes it imperative that the CSCE process be continued and developed. This long-term, dynamic process, the basis of which is the undertaking to refrain from the use and threat of force, serves to strengthen peace and stability in Europe. It helps to develop the human dimension of detente and to strengthen practical co-operation between East and West in the interests of their peoples. The danger and impediments to human co-existence inherent in the division of Germany and Europe are a particular burden upon the German people. For that reason, the two German States bear special responsibility for the maintenance of peace in Europe."

That, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the perspective in which we see the CSCE process.

The co-operation sought in the concluding document can still be extended in many areas and into many new areas. Co-operation in the interests of all Europeans has to give new impetus to the CSCE process for the implementation of all the different parts of the Final Act: political and economic co-operation, industrial co-operation, technology and science, protection of the environment and co-operation in the cultural field. The Scientific Forum in Hamburg has blazed a trail for the exchange of knowledge and for joint research projects during the next decade.

It is also time to facilitate a free and continuous dialogue between creative persons in East and West. It is time to make the nations more aware of the broad common spiritual and cultural heritage of Europe. Hungary's invitation to a meeting of leading personalities from the cultural field presents the participating States with a good forum for both of these purposes.

The potential of the two baskets in the Final Act is now only emerging. The spectrum of possibilities is a wide one and can be extended. The Europeans have so much to give each other. At their Spring meeting in Lisbon on 7 June, the Foreign Ministers of NATO stated that they seek genuine detente in all areas, through constructive dialogue and wide-ranging co-operation. This is a far-reaching offer. It implies willingness to resolve security issues on a co-operative basis.

The Federal Republic of Germany will continue to see its European responsibility as that of advancing the European Community and of promoting co-operation throughout Europe. This position is part of a long-term, reliable and calculable policy pursued by us, a policy born of historical responsibility, national and European responsibility. Europe belongs together, and its people want to be together.

Mr. Chairman, 1985 is a year of significant moves affecting the future of security and co-operation in Europe. Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Erich Honecker, Chairman of the German Democratic Republic Council of State, jointly stated in Moscow on 12 March that the resumption of the arms control dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union could herald a new phase of West-East relations and that the Geneva arms control talks could provide a general stimulus for an improvement in West-East relations — in other words it is about the possibility of a new phase of realistic detente. What the Federal Chancellor stated on 12 March 1985 also applies here:

“The inviolability of frontiers and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States in Europe in their present borders constitute fundamental preconditions for peace.”

Ladies and Gentlemen, no one has any grounds to doubt the honesty and validity of this statement. It is addressed not only to the superpowers, also the medium-sized and smaller States have to make their contribution. Until the very recent past, Europe has been the scene of bloody wars. Many armed conflicts in all parts of the world were generated from here. But Europe also made a great contribution to the development of the world.

Today it is peace initiatives that must radiate from Europe. That is why West and East must tackle the great global responsibilities of the future together. No industrial State in West or East can evade the responsibility for the fight against poverty and ignorance, against hunger and disease in the Third World. We want all nations of this world be able to realize their right of self-determination and to live in peace. This implies respect for plurality within the international order. This implies respect for genuine non-alignment, independence and autonomy of the countries of the Third World. It implies refraining from transplanting the East-West antagonism to other regions of the world. It implies moderation, restraint, awareness of responsibility in international relations and a definitive renunciation of endeavours to achieve hegemony, which endanger peace.

Mr. Chairman, the crucial task now is to be realistic in the hopes that we place in the continuing development of relations among the CSCE States and to set about our work with discretion, patience and understanding for the needs of all concerned.

If we create confidence in the willingness of all of us to pursue dialogue and co-operation, if we are prepared to respect the interests of the other and to seek accommodation with our own interests, if we can all decide to educate our young people to understand each other rather than to hate each other, if human rights and the rights of self-determination are respected, then we can succeed in creating a European order of peace based not only on deterrence and fear but on reliable, agreed security structures and on trust: peaceful order in which people, irrespective of their social system in which they live, can exercise the rights guaranteed to them in the Final Act.

Each of the Ministers present here, all the Governments of the signatory States must know that the most reliable yardstick with which to judge the CSCE process is in the final analysis what the individual derives from it. It is all about people, each and every individual. That is our responsibility and it is by that that history will judge us.

The people of my country want only to live in peace and freedom, in awareness of our historical responsibility as well as in respect for all other nations. Federal President Richard von Weizsacker expressed this in his speech on 8 May 1985 for us Germans. This peaceful attitude is rooted in the best traditions of our history. This peaceful attitude is what determines our policy in pursuit of peace in Europe.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.