Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 672 (1978)[1]

Implementation of the Final Act of the CSCE in Belgrade (General policy of the CE)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having regard to the report of its Political Affairs Committee on the course of the Belgrade meetings following up the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Doc. 4150) ;

2. Recalling its Resolution 654 (1977), on the implementation of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference ;

3. Considering that the Helsinki Final Act claims to mark both the end of the former cold war policy and the beginning of a new policy of cooperation and détente ;

4. Affirming that the concept of detente contains the respect of the dipnity and the value of the human person which need not be diminished by reason of ideological differences ;

5. Considering that the Belgrade meetings could have represented an important step towards consolidating the process of detente, in so far as they provided an opportunity :

to carry out an initial stock-taking of the implementation of all the provisions in the Final Act ;

to intensify mutual relations in the economic, scientific, humanitarian and cultural fields ;

to strengthen the feeling of security among European peoples, through the extension of confidence-building measures and by making progress towards the solution of the problems of military balance in the framework of disarmament and of arms control ;

6. Aware of the fact that the motives behind the Final Act, its declared objectives and the manner of their implementation correspond to concepts which differ among the various participating states ;

7. Observing, however, that the commitment of the thirty-five signatory countries to the full implementation of the provisions of the Final Act greatly raised the hopes of European peoples by opening up prospects for fresh contacts enabling the individual to benefit from greater co-operation and increased security in Europe ;

8. Realising that the exchange of views in Belgrade on the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act, in which each participating country had an opportunity to speak in public session and in committee, to make its own assessment and to state its own point of view, represents a certain advance in the relations between countries having different socio-political systems,

9. Regrets, nevertheless, that seven months of meetings should produce so little in the way of tangible results for the people of Europe ;

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1. Assembly debate on 25 and 26 April 1978 (3rd, 4th and 5th Sittings) (seeDoc. 4150, report of the Political Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 April 1978 (5th Sitting).

10. Reaffirms its belief that further measures to promote the free flow of information of all kinds and to improve working conditions for foreign correspondents are necessary in the interests of increased mutual understanding between peoples, and regrets that it was not possible at Belgrade to adopt any of the proposals put forward with a view to the future development of human contacts and free dissemination of information ;

11. Reiterates its conviction that the progressive increase in the number of persons permitted to emigrate or to travel outside their own countries for family, personal or professional reasons is a prerequisite for the development of detente ;

12. Notes that fundamental political differences over the manner of respecting human rights and individual freedoms in the context of the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act prevented a thorough discussion of the many concrete proposals for fostering the progress of co-operation and security in Europe ;

13. Realising that every decision taken in the framework of the CSCE requires a consensus,

14. Points out that the citizen may lose interest in efforts to further co-operation and security at the intergovernmental level unless some substantial progress in the areas covered by the Final Act can be perceived by the European peoples directly affected ;

15. Expresses the hope that the three meetings of experts, namely :

a scientific forum, beginning in June 1978,

a meeting to work out a European system for the peaceful settlement of disputes, beginning in October 1978,

a meeting on the economic, scientific and cultural aspects of co-operation in the Mediterranean, beginning in February 1979,will produce solid conclusions for submission to the Madrid meeting, in autumn 1980 ;

16. Welcomes the good co-operation among member countries of the Council of Europe at the Belgrade meetings ;

17. Invites the governments of the member states :

a. to emphasise the universal and indivisible nature of detente, by convincing all the signatories of the CSCE Final Act that Europe cannot be an island of security in a strife-torn world ;

b. to regard all the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act as guidelines in their bilateral and multilateral relations with countries taking part in the CSCE and, in particular, to further humanitarian contacts and exchanges of information with a view to bringing the peoples concerned closer together ;

c. to make all necessary efforts for breaking the deadlock and for promoting the development of the negotiations on mutual and balanced arms reductions in Europe ;

d. to seek working methods and procedures guaranteeing more effective implementation of the Final Act ;

e. to hold more meetings of CSCE experts in the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, with a view to moving beyond simple exchanges of views in the direction of greater coordination and, if possible, harmonisation of the basic positions of the twenty member countries, and preparing joint practical proposals for the implementation and enrichment of the provisions of the Final Act ;

f. to request their delegations to the meeting of experts in Bonn on 20 June 1978 in preparing the scientific forum to take into account the efforts toward East-West co-operation of the scientific working parties set up under the auspices of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe ; and to encourage participation in the "Parliamentary and Scientific Conferences", colloquies and round tables of a scientific character organised by the Parliamentary Assembly with a view to contributing to closer relations between parliamentarians, scientists and technologists from all the countries of Europe and to promoting the development of science and technology ;

18. Further calls on the governments of the member states to take into consideration the serious nature of the development of political terrorism, which has been borne out by the tragic events that have affected, and still affect, a number of member countries, and which constitutes one of the threats to human rights and the development of democratic regimes in member countries of the Council of Europe.