Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 943 (1990)[1]

Relations between Europe, the United States of America and Canada in the 1990s

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly recalls its recently adopted general policy decision (Recommendation 1119 of 31 January 1990) to consider the possibilities of more closely involving the two non-European participants in the CSCE process, the United States of America and Canada, in the work of the Council of Europe.

2. The Assembly bears in mind the visit of its President to Ottawa and Washington in October 1989, and that of the Sub-Committee on Relations with the United States of America and Canada in March 1990, as well as the reports of its Political Affairs Committee (Doc. 6217) and its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development (Doc. 6206).

3. It recalls its regular past invitations to the United States Congress and members of the Canadian Parliament to participate in several activities of the Assembly, such as the 1st and 2nd Strasbourg Conferences on Parliamentary Democracy (1983 and 1987), and also in debates on the CSCE and the annual reports on the activities of OECD, in which the Secretary General of the latter organisation traditionally participates.

4. The Assembly notes that relations between Europe and the great democracies of North America which are full participants, alongside thirty-three European states, in the Helsinki process, are based on ties of culture, kinship and shared democratic values.

5. The Assembly is convinced that the recent and continuing upheavals in Central and Eastern Europe, inspired by the insistence of the peoples concerned on enjoying the rights associated with these same values, more than ever require the deepening of old-established transatlantic ties, to help ensure that these aspirations find fulfilment within fully democratic structures of co-operation.

6. It believes that the existing machinery of co-operation, both Atlantic (OECD and NATO) and European (the future European economic space, in which both the European Community and EFTA countries will participate, as well as the expanding Council of Europe), will be required to meet the new challenges at least in the short and medium term, since no consensus in favour of creating new structures is likely or desirable at the envisaged CSCE summit meeting.

7. The Assembly considers that :

7.1. the vocation of the European Community is increasingly to constitute a federalising core for those European countries aspiring to supranational integration ;

7.2. the CSCE could, in parallel, assume an ever-greater importance as a consensus-based structure for pan-European and Atlantic co-operation, but that reinforced links with peoples, through their representatives in parliaments, as well as intergovernmental structures for implementation, will need to be introduced ;

1. Assembly debate on 10 May 1990 (7th Sitting) (see Doc. 6217, report of the Political Affairs Committee, Rapporteur : Mr Sager). Text adopted by the Assembly on 10 May 1990 (7th Sitting).

7.3. the expanding Council of Europe, with its flexible system of interparliamentary and intergovernmental co-operation, of a confederal nature, is the organisation which is the best placed to supply the CSCE with its missing parliamentary dimension, as well as its operational infrastructure, provided also by other organisations specialising, for example, in defence or economic co-operation

8. The Assembly therefore decides, following its contact with the authorities of the United States of America and Canada, which it will continue to consult :

8.1. to organise debates on CSCE matters on an experimental basis in such a way as to facilitate the participation of non-European parliamentarians, for example during the traditional summer sessions (early July) ;

8.2. to introduce procedural arrangements with a view to creating an associate CSCE membership including full voting rights in CSCE debates for all non-member states of the Council of Europe, signatories of the Helsinki Final Act ;

8.3. to instruct its Committee on Rules of Procedure to submit to the Assembly a draft amendment to the Rules of Procedure on the basis of these guidelines.