

Mr. Mauno KOIVISTO (President of the Republic, Finland):

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to congratulate our host, President François Mitterrand very warmly. It gives us great pleasure to see France, which has so often been a leader in the realm of political ideas, as the host of this historic Meeting.

Freedom, human rights and equality are values that unite all our nations today. This common set of values has brought us together for the second Summit Meeting of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Today, we see the true potential of European co-operation, but we also see the challenges ahead.

We here represent a community of nations that has come to a turning point in its history. After decades of division, Europe is becoming united.

We will conclude our gathering by adopting and signing a joint document, the Paris Charter, that embodies the momentous change Europe has experienced. The Charter aims at consolidating that change. It is also a programme of action for building tomorrow's Europe.

This message of democracy, peace and prosperity and unity is a response to the aspirations of our peoples. Here lies the foundation of our future co-operation.

Finland lies on the edge of Europe, relatively far from its heartlands. Yet we are also familiar with Europe in all its diversity and with the dynamics of its continuous change.

We are a Nordic country, proud of our Scandinavian heritage of values and of Nordic co-operation.

Historically at the crossroads of East and West, we have been enriched by influences from both directions. For centuries, the

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countries around the Baltic Sea have been our partners in material and cultural exchange. We have consistently taken part in the growth and unification of the economic and cultural community of European nations.

As Europe continues to change, Finland puts special emphasis on its natural ties with neighbouring countries and regions. Our neighbour, the Soviet Union, is going through a period of trying reform. Its successful outcome is vital for the stability of Europe.

The disappearance of ideological division and political barriers in Europe holds the promise of a new era of diversity and pluralism. All peoples have the right to self-determination and political sovereignty. These aims should be sought through negotiations. Mutually beneficial ties, particularly economic ones, should be maintained and developed.

National minorities are part of the diversity of Europe and contribute to its richness. Their identity must be protected and the human rights of their members honoured.

This new era calls for tolerance and respect for the rights of others. It is our experience that it is advisable to cherish good-neighbourly relations.

For Europe, division and confrontation were the heritage of the Second World War. The unification of Germany builds confidence in Europe. It marks the end of the division of our continent. It proves that the future of a new Europe lies in conciliation and co-operation. It is appropriate that the new CSCE Council of Foreign Ministers will hold its first meeting in Berlin.

The past decades have been an unprecedented period of rapid and steady growth of affluence in Europe, but not all countries have fared equally well. Further growth in the economic and social gap may threaten stability in all of Europe.

For centuries, people in Europe have moved across frontiers. Freedom of movement is indeed a fundamental human right. People's

decision to seek livelihood outside their region or country is often economically motivated. It would, however, be in the interest of stability in Europe if people had the opportunity for a materially secure life without having to leave their homes.

The problems of countries in transition from command to market economy will test our newly-acquired unity. We have here committed ourselves, in the name of common interest, to support those who are ready to help themselves. The joint responsibility of all the CSCE countries in this regard will provide us with assurance of more lasting security in Europe.

Greater economic efficiency, international co-operation and integration will ensure the well-being of our nations. Efficiency, however, means rational use of resources and the environment. We have to find sustainable solutions to our energy needs. In the end our fates will depend on a sound ecological balance.

The military situation in Europe will improve through the results of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces and the new confidence-building measures as well as other military-political changes. Armed forces are being reduced, and the capability of offensive action is essentially diminished. Military security and confidence are being built through increased openness.

The time has come to begin preparing a new joint CSCE forum for negotiating disarmament and military openness. Equal participation is the best way to ensure that our countries and all subregions fully benefit from growing security and stability. We in the North also stress the importance of maritime security and stability.

In the CSCE process, all States have their say. This has been essential for a small neutral country like Finland.

The Paris Charter will mark our first efforts to strengthen the CSCE structure. We shall intensify our mutual consultation. We shall support

democratic change and human rights. We shall prepare for joint prevention and management of conflicts that may arise. We offer our warmest congratulations to the host cities of the first CSCE institutions.

Europe must be an open continent. It has to contribute to global peace and development. We must support a more efficient system of collective security within the United Nations and participate in the construction of a new world order.

The Paris Summit begins a new phase in our co-operation. We Finns will have the privilege of hosting the next CSCE follow-up meeting in our capital, where the process started 18 years ago, and where the Final Act was signed. I look forward to wishing my colleagues welcome to Helsinki on the occasion of the 1992 meeting.