

International Foundation for Socio-Economic and Political Studies

(The Gorbachev Foundation)

**To the organizers and participants of the Copenhagen Anniversary
Conference**

Regrettably, I was not able to participate in the Anniversary Conference on the occasion of such an important event for Europe.

The Copenhagen Document has become a milestone in the European process initiated by the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. The special meaning of the Document lies in the fact that it has fixed commitments on common human values and interests as the foundation of the pan-European process.

As you know, the issues of Europe have occupied and still occupy a special place in my political work. In my time, I put forward the idea of the “pan-European house”, which, I am sure, entirely retains the relevance these days too.

The end of the Cold War changed the overall climate in Europe. At the Paris Summit in November 1990, all its participants signed The Charter for New Europe which has opened the prospect for the genuine European unity. But not all of our hopes and expectations have come true. Not all in the declarations of that time was perceived by politicians as guidelines to follow.

The Copenhagen Document says: “full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are prerequisites for progress in setting up the lasting order of peace, security, justice and co-operation”. This is correct, though is not always complied with.

Another thing is correct as well – human rights and freedoms cannot be fully ensured without setting up the lasting order of peace and security. And if most of what has been declared in the Copenhagen Document failed to be implemented, then this is possibly because we failed to resolve the main issue – to lay the firm foundation of the common architecture of peace and security in Europe, common to all the states in the area of the OSCE.

We didn't create effective pan-European mechanisms of “conflict management”, where human rights are violated most of all. We lost a lot of opportunities and time. Incorrect assessment of events, concerning termination of the “Cold War” and demise of the Soviet Union, impeded creation of the integrated Europe. New dividing lines appeared in place of former ones. Still some look at Russia like at an outsider, which is and perceives itself as a part of Europe.

In June 2008 President Medvedev of Russia proposed to discuss the idea of a new treaty on European security. Its essence is to create common undivided area in the sphere of military and political security in order to get rid of the heritage of the “Cold War”. I support this idea and call for all citizens of Europe to consider it in an unbiased and constructive way.

As you know the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepared such a draft where the idea of President Medvedev is concretized. The draft is submitted to the governments and international organizations. I would like to hope that proposals which it contains as other initiatives, will serve as a catalyst of a meaningful discussion which will be useful for drawing up common approaches.

Today Europe is experiencing difficult times. Prophecies on the decline of Europe are voiced again. Countries of the continent painfully undergo the ongoing crisis which results for Europe in deep and negative shifts in the world alignment of forces. Real threat for loss of Europe’s role of an authoritative civilization center in the globalizing world is evident.

How can we recover the leadership positions of Europe? I am convinced that it is time to restore the idea of transcontinental society from Vancouver to Vladivostok with the full participation of Russia and North America. That is a chance for Europe to remain an influential and stabilizing power in the world. That is also a chance for the OSCE’s role to grow and to give the second breath to the organization and to make it an efficient instrument of peace, security and cooperation in Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area.

I wish success to your conference.

M. GORBACHEV