

THE CSCE FOLLOW-UP MEETING IN VIENNA (1986-1989) THE N+N, EUROPEAN SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIENNA

During the post-Helsinki evolution of the CSCE, especially at the conferences in Belgrade and Madrid, the N+N states had played a role as bridge-builders. This mediating role had gained particular relevance in the early 1980s. The mere existence of an N+N group helped keep the CSCE process alive even as a number of controversial issues – from Euromissiles to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the introduction of martial law in Poland – implied the onset of a new Cold War.

Given the significance of the N+N in the first post-Helsinki decade, the obvious question to ask is: did they continue to play a similar role in the CSCE follow-up meeting in Vienna? To examine this question, the sub-project will focus on two issues: the human dimension and military security. Since human rights emerged as the key point in Vienna and the N+N generally shared the Western position on this issue, this made their mediating role potentially difficult. At the same time, the apparent Soviet interest in improving their international image by proposing a human rights conference in Moscow created new opportunities to push the human rights agenda forward. In 1987, for example, the N+N proposed a minimum standard for remedies in case of human rights violations and called for the abolition of capital punishment. Perhaps most significantly, in July 1987, Austria and Switzerland submitted a comprehensive draft for the various human rights provisions and commitments that were, for the most part, included in the January 1989 Vienna Concluding Document.

The sub-project will also look at the limited success in the field of military security. However, ultimately the N+N were unable to fully participate in these discussions for two reasons: first, they did not belong to NATO or the Warsaw Pact and hence had little concrete to offer on reducing the size of the conventional forces that the two sides commanded; second, their own security interests were far from identical. The fact that the Warsaw Pact's previously unified position was disintegrating during the Vienna meeting meant that the Cold War East-West dynamic, and the mediating role the N+N could play in questions of military security, was becoming increasingly ambiguous.

The questions that will guide the research include: did the bridge-building functions continue essentially as before, or did the rapidly changing international landscape make the N+N basically irrelevant (or conversely increase their significance)? Did the decrease in East-West tensions and the focus on human rights lead to the relative diminution of the importance that N+N held in the context of the Vienna meetings? How united was the N+N group during the Vienna process?

In order to answer these questions, this sub-project will aim to reconstruct the roles played by the N+N countries in Vienna. The importance of this sub-project is highlighted by the fact that the role of the N+N group during the Vienna meeting is a relatively understudied issue. The relevance of the N+N has been well researched for the 1970s and the 1980s, but there is no in-depth historical study of their role in Vienna. In order to keep this sub-project within manageable limits, it will treat the N+N as a group rather than zooming in on one or several countries. This also makes sure that the group's coherence as well as the rifts will come into sharp focus.

Primary sources either have recently been or are in the process of being declassified.

For example, in Switzerland, the so-called 30-year rule means that the relevant Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (at the *Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv* in Bern) documents for 1986-1989 will be open to researchers in time for the beginning of this project. In Finland, the 25-year declassification rule means that all relevant materials have been recently opened for research at the Finnish Foreign Ministry Archives (*Ulkoasiainministeriön arkisto*) in Helsinki. The Swedish case is more complicated (with various exemptions), but normally documents produced by the Foreign Ministry and held in the National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) in Stockholm can be accessed after 20 years. Documents from the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be available to the project with a special permit. The archival documents will be complemented by memoirs of diplomats, oral histories, newspaper accounts, documentaries, and interviews.

The overall project description

Research on contemporary history in the D-A-CH region has long ignored the CSCE. While historical studies on the CSCE process up to the mid-1980s have been published in recent years for the third CSCE Follow-up Meeting 1986–1989 in Vienna mainly publications by political scientists and former CSCE diplomats are available.

The project aims to close this research gap by focusing on the two major areas of negotiation: on the humanitarian dimension as a factor in the transformation of Eastern Central and Eastern Europe and the dimension of military security. In all subprojects, for which diverse source bases and different perspectives are chosen, the question of the significance of the CSCE process in ending the East-West conflict in Europe plays a decisive role.

The six subprojects will look at the Vienna conference from different angles, focusing on state as well as civil society actors. They will examine the CSCE's effects on the Central Eastern European countries, but also on the policies of the western and N+N states. The project's objective is to determine the CSCE's dynamics in the final phase of the Cold War and to highlight its importance as a factor of détente policy.

The project is based on documents from the state archives of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as on documents of civil society groups, contemporary witness interviews and media reports. It will examine not only the level of polity, which includes the constitutional framework of multilateral diplomacy within the framework of the CSCE, and the policy, by which the objects, tasks and goals of political confrontations are meant, but also that of politics, i.e. the interests of the actors involved, their modes of action and the means of achieving their goals. The aim is to closely interlink the questions of the project partners. Methodologically, all sub-projects are conceived as contributions to a new history of diplomacy and international relations which include aspects of emotional history.

The project is conceived as a networking project, in which source material will be pooled and shared by all participants. Workshops and conferences will be held and the results published in monographs and joint publications.

This thesis is part of the broader collective project entitled “The CSCE Follow-up Meeting in Vienna (1986-1989) – Struggling for Human Rights and European Security at the End of the Cold War.” Undertaken by the four academic institutions that are the University of Hildesheim, the University of Innsbruck, the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History, and the Graduate Institute of Geneva, the project is divided into four distinct parts.