

**Oral History Workshop**  
**The historical experience of the neutral and non-aligned states**  
**in the CSCE**

Friday, 23 February 2007

9:30-17:30 Austrian Institute for International Affairs (OIIA), Operngasse 20 B, 1040  
Vienna

**Participants**

*Contemporary witnesses:*

**Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

Member of the Swedish CSCE-delegation in Helsinki and Geneva, 1973-1975, Secretary to the Swedish Delegation in the Belgrade meeting at the MFA Stockholm, 1977-78

**Göran Berg**

Member of the Swedish CSCE-delegation in Helsinki and Geneva, Nov. 1972-Sept. 1975

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

Expert member of the Yugoslav delegations at the second stage of the CSCE in Geneva, 1974-1975, and at the CSCE follow-up meetings in Belgrade, 1977-78, and Madrid, 1980-1981

**Franz Ceska**

Member of the Austrian CSCE-delegations in Geneva, 1973-1975, Belgrade, 1977-78, and head of the Austrian delegation to the follow-up meeting in Madrid, 1980-1983

**Jaakko Iloniemi**

Head of the Finnish CSCE-delegation in Geneva, 1973-1975, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, MFA Helsinki, 1975-1977

**Paavo Keisalo**

Chef of Bureau for the CSCE, MFA Helsinki, 1971-1973, Member of the Finnish CSCE-delegation in Geneva, 1973-1975

**Felix Mikl**

Member of the Austrian CSCE-delegation to Geneva, 1973-1975

**Andreas Oplatka**

Press correspondent for the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* in Stockholm, covering the Dipoli talks, 1972-1973

**Markku Reimaa**

Member of Finnish CSCE-delegations to Geneva, 1973-1975, and the Follow-up meetings in Belgrade, 1977-78, Madrid, 1980-1983, and Stockholm, 1984-1986; Ambassador and Head of the Special Mission of Finland to the CSCE in Vienna, 1986-1989

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

Member of the Swiss CSCE-delegation to Helsinki and Geneva, 1972-1975, CSCE desk at the MFA in Berne, 1975-1977, member of Swiss delegation to Belgrade, 1977-78, deputy head of Swiss delegation to the first round of Madrid, 1980-81

**Walter Siegl**

Member of the Austrian CSCE-delegation to Geneva, 1973-1975

**Spencer Oliver (16:00-17:30)**

Member of the US-delegation to the CSCE follow-up meetings in Belgrade, 1977-78, and Madrid, 1980-1983

*Researchers:*

**Peter Bohaumilitzky** (National Defence Academy, Vienna)

**Irene Etzersdorfer** (University of Vienna, note taker)

**Thomas Fischer** (Austrian Institute for International Affairs, Conference convener,)

**Otmar Höll** (Director, Austrian Institute for International Affairs)

**Paul Luif** (Austrian Institute for International Affairs)

**Wolfgang Mueller** (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Historische Kommission)

**Christian Nünlist** (Center for Security Studies, ETH Zürich)

**Erwin A. Schmidl** (National Defence Academy, Vienna)

**Felix Schneider** (National Defence Academy, Vienna)

**Panel 1**

09:30-11:00

**1969-1973: The Finnish CSCE-Initiative and Multilateral Preparatory Talks at Dipoli, Helsinki**

**Thomas Fischer**

Today we focus on the historical part. Year 1969 is the point of departure.

**Paavo Keisalo**

When Finland offered to be the host country for talks, many people thought Finland was acting as an agent of the Soviet Union. Actually, the SU suggested the idea already in 1954 for the first time. General idea was to have a sort of peace agreement. Finland then decided to give an answer, which would not be too negative. Security in Europe was of extreme importance and could be strengthened. Conclusion: Finland could participate in such talks if all states concerned would be represented. Finland knew that that was not the case. Soviets repeatedly proposed something. Under Brezhnev this became an annual routine. Finland had internal reasons to respond, it was 'not a wish to please masters'. Foreign Policy was a policy of neutrality. Finland's position towards the two German entities by that time: 1<sup>st</sup> Finland recognized only states and not governments. Finland offered Helsinki because that was the only place where the two German governments were represented at an equal level. Aim was to reach recognition of East Germany by Finland. Finland sent memorandum to European governments including US and Canada. 2<sup>nd</sup> they said talks should be held without preconditions. SU had preconditions. 3<sup>rd</sup> Finland insisted on careful preparation. 4<sup>th</sup> participation would not mean further commitment. Initiative started in May 1969.

**Andreas Oplatka**

Press correspondent for Neue Zürcher Zeitung in Stockholm. He arrived there in 1970 only.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

In Berne there was indeed widespread interpretation that the Finns were active on behalf of the SU. Swiss regarded themselves as the only “real” neutrals, whereas Austria, Finland and Sweden were seen as “neutralistic”. In 1969 a cautious Swiss answer was given - “yes, but...”. Fear that Security conference would have to deal with German question. Was before de facto recognition of German states. Reminds the group, that we all should look at these questions from the knowledge of 1969.

### **Thomas Fischer**

As recent Finnish research has shown the German question drove Finnish CSCE-initiative very much. But idea has been there before.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

Quotes Edouard Brunner from his book “Lambris dorés et coulisses” (2001):

“Kekkonen had close confident relations with SU. West would not come to protect Finland if Finland would be attacked by SU. Helsinki had nothing to loose by taking up initiatives, this would be an initiative, which pleased SU. Finland fulfilled her role in an excellent way. Helsinki was the only neutral capital where the two Germans were represented by Ambassadors.”

### **Thomas Fischer**

They were head of trade missions, not Ambassadors – with reference to the quotation above.

### **Andreas Oplatka**

Finnish Proposal to recognize the two German states was made in Sept. 71 as far as he remembers. Other participants say it was later. Oplatka remembers precisely since his daughter was born at that time and therefore he will never forget.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Confirms that Mr Oplatka is right. The September 71 date refers to a plan in the Finnish Foreign Ministry for recognition of the GDR, however, it was originally intended to be launched much later. It was Foreign Minister Ahti Karjalainen who gave the secret plan away prematurely in a Nordic meeting.

### **Paavo Keisalo**

Says he now understands what Oplatka refers to as the ‘German package’. But the negotiations until final recognition of both German states then still took longer.

### **Franz Ceska**

He was at the time in Geneva and kept reporting to Vienna. Refers to July 1970 – Austrians were still traumatized by the events in Prague. In Foreign Ministry nobody was really interested in CSCE apart from Ambassador Liedermann. The Austrian memorandum of 24<sup>th</sup> of July 1970 was a response that had to be given to Finland. Not really new ideas. Questions were around for a couple of years. Austria suggested Vienna

for preparatory expert level talks but not with a lot of insistence. Swiss view of other neutrals was prudent. Austria was in the beginning sometimes regarded more neutralistic than neutral. Austria insisted that she is part of the West. In the reverse case, Austria's Foreign Ministry said the Finns were not neutrals since they had an agreement with SU. There were these sorts of discussions.

Kreisky proposed in 1971 to include the Middle East question on the CSCE agenda. Kreisky wanted to invite the Middle East since this was a focus of his foreign policy interests. Kreisky did not understand at the beginning what the CSCE was, later he realized that in its essence it was an ideological battle. Real interest of Austria started with Dipoli talks. Liedermann together with Ambassador Ludwig Steiner (Political Director) were the driving forces of the undertaking in the Austrian Foreign Ministry. They went around Kreisky's intentions. Kreisky had ideas of his own. Kreisky – as usual – publicly announced in advance CSCE-negotiators should stop talking and come to a quick ending.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Foreign Minister Rudolf Kirchschläger should be mentioned also with regard to his service in 1968 in Prague. He was very much personally interested in the CSCE. When the Austrian Memorandum was handed over to British, Austrian representative in London thought it to be a constructive contribution. No reply was expected. Middle East was a very typical Kreisky proposal. Kirchschläger was deeply against this Middle East proposal. Kirchschläger was in Moscow at the time when Kreisky launched the idea and took a long time to explain to his Soviet counterparts that this would not represent the view of the Austrian government.

### **Walter Siegl**

One had to be cautious to engage in a relationship, which could be a burden. US took scant interest in CSCE. Austria wanted to rely strongly on Western support. Word on Kreisky: Kreisky was an intellectual. He was fond of talking about ideas. In 1964 Kreisky paid a visit to Nasser due to his personal interest in the Middle East. Wherever there was a chance, he promoted his idea. It has to be mentioned that there is a Mediterranean chapter in the Helsinki Final Act, the idea of broadening the European idea to the Mediterranean.

### **Thomas Fischer**

We have to differentiate the Mediterranean chapter and Kreisky's Middle East Initiative. They are two different things. As for the Kreisky proposal this was not just a blur of his mind. He did not only utter it for once. He launched it on purpose, and would raise the issue repeatedly over time.

### **Markku Reimaa**

What was the main reason for the Finnish initiative? How come that the Warsaw Pact countries including Moscow were showing flexibility so quickly after Prague? The Finnish memorandum was the way out of a tricky foreign policy situation– documents in Washington I have studied prove it. Different approaches to neutrality were already an issue. No commitment.

Dipoli was one of the most unconventional meetings in International Politics.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

Austrian memorandum: Series of conferences were suggested. Yugoslavia was also traumatized by Prague, many of my colleagues have been sent to the border in Summer 1968. Yugoslavia was very much involved in the non-aligned movement. There was an anecdote relating to fears in Western Europe that it might be 'finlandized'. An Eastern European comment was – "but we are hoping that one day we would be!" Finlandization was perceived as a desirable model for East Europeans.

### **Thomas Fischer**

SU wanted to make sure that Finland is no longer an attractive model for the countries in Eastern Europe after Prague 1968.

### **Göran Berg**

Wants to make some general remarks in the beginning. Swedish perception of Finland's foreign policy was that the Finns managed a very difficult situation during the Cold war extremely well. Sweden's foreign policy at the time was very much focused on solidarity with third world countries, i.e. Vietnam.

The memorandum of 1969 was not seen as a pressure from Moscow. It was well received, and we considered it to be in line with Finnish policy. It was not the European concerns that worried Sweden that much, but rather the concerns of the UN. Sweden did not want the CSCE to contradict the UN Declaration on Friendly Relations Between States (1970). When it comes to neutrality of European states, we realized that there were different forms of neutrality (Sweden, Finland, Austria and Switzerland). The non-aligned movement was something else. Certain cautions prevailed vis-à-vis the non-aligned in the European context.

### **Paavo Keisalo**

Now elaborates on Dipoli. The process itself was the important thing for the Finns, not the end. In winter 1970 it looked as if our initiative was running out of steam. Foreign Minister kept initiative on. January 72 official bilateral talks started. One problem right before Dipoli was that the SU was represented by vice-foreign minister Zorin – 'Greetings from the Cold War'. 22<sup>nd</sup> of Nov. 1972 Dipoli started and soon turned into a real pre-conference. Its result, the Blue book was the charter in a way. Finland had 3 objectives in Dipoli – 1) exercise 'Chairmanship' in an impartial and neutral way. Therefore a chairman's group was established within the Ministry. Purpose of group was to handle all difficult questions. 2) Ensure that at least the politically important stages of the CSCE took place in Helsinki. Finns were extremely happy that Swiss (with Geneva) took the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase from them. We had toured Helsinki to find a place for more than 200 people and press facilities, but no such thing was available in Helsinki at that time. 3) Show that Finland was capable to organize these meetings. In the eyes of the UK ambassador to Helsinki, Finland was the real winner of this exercise.

### **Andreas Oplatka**

What was the public response to these things? Was there an awareness of what was happening in Helsinki or was it just a sideline of international politics? Some 300 journalists were at the beginning in Helsinki, more than diplomats, but at the end only a dozen stayed over time, half of them were Finnish colleagues. This means that the matter and the material were too complicated. Nobody could follow the talks who was not regularly present. Only understandable if you did follow, then it was fascinating. Decisive phase were indeed the Dipoli talks. Whether there was a public interest is hard to decide: I re-read my own articles in preparation for today's meeting. I was surprised what I could write, how far I could go in NZZ. To write about the work of the sub-commissions for example. You could never offer this to an editorial board, today. In July 1973 the 1<sup>st</sup> phase was closed. First speaker was Gromyko. It was mainly discussion about baskets. Position of the SU towards Human Rights – only under respect of customs, traditions of each country and no interference in internal affairs. In the end the human rights were the price SU had to pay for the conference: Dipoli decisive because it was not possible to go back to zero again – although the Soviets tried at the opening of stage II.

### **Thomas Fischer**

The discussion on where phase II of the negotiations should be held was also the moment when the neutrals became competitors.

I would like to leave the issue of bargaining for basket 3 to be discussed later.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

I am happy to hear that the Finns didn't have bad feelings against Swiss when the negotiations moved to Geneva. His memory is that Switzerland never campaigned for having the conference in Geneva. For various reasons, the CSCE was very unpopular in Switzerland those days. Swiss faced the same problems in organizing the venue for the negotiations as the Finns, therefore were originally against to have 2<sup>nd</sup> round in Geneva but "disponible". Also, we couldn't say 'no' to a consensus of the other participating states. Germany was main country for the move to Geneva. Personally I would have preferred to stay in Helsinki.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Helsinki, Geneva, or Vienna was the question. When the Austrians first proposed Vienna as a venue in their 1970 memorandum they had slightly different ideas on the conference – they were explicitly talking about expert level talks. In that case Vienna would have been available. Vienna was then offered again for a later stage.

1973 June – Swiss did not put themselves forward as a host. However, Swiss did to let the UK know that they were 'disponible in principle' but 'non agissant'. It is true that for Geneva they had same problem in finding a location. There was even the thought of splitting the work of the committees in different Swiss towns.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

There was one more idea: To split up the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase in different European capitals. One basket here, another there, Paris included. Ideas floated around.

**Franz Ceska**

It is true that Austria declared its readiness, Austrians had an interest to establish Vienna for international talks but we realized that we had no chance to beat Dipoli or Geneva. In Belgrade, however, we tried very hard to get next meeting to Vienna. This failed, Madrid was chosen for the next follow-up. Vienna would only have its turn afterwards. But we were always eager to have it in Vienna to boost Vienna as an international center.

**Paavo Keisalo**

France was completely against Vienna, because MBFR talks were held there. Helsinki – Geneva – Paris was their idea.

**Panel 2**

11:30 – 13:00

**1973-1975: Geneva Talks and Helsinki Summit (Part 1)****Thomas Fischer**

Would like to investigate who came up with the baskets? He found in some archives that it was already proposed in 1972, f. ex. by the Austrians suggesting the Finnish chairman draw up a ‘list’ of agenda items. What Liedermann at that time has suggested seems to be pretty much the same as the Swiss later did without using the word basket. A Dutch diplomat claims to have introduced the word ‘basket’ in the discussion, using the French word ‘panier’ in December 72 already. In British documents the word basket is first mentioned in January 1973 in connection with the Swiss ‘operation basket’. What we know for sure is that after the Swiss Head of Delegation Samuel Campiche has elaborated the concept of the baskets the Austrians then proposed to formally introduce it to the discussion. To me, it is not contradictory. It rather seems that the general idea of such a concept had been around since December 72, it was then the Swiss who took it up and elaborated it under term baskets.

**Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

According to her recollection the “basket” concept was first introduced by Samuel Campiche at the end of January 1973 when the Swiss delegation was given the task to compile all the agenda proposals and organize them under four different headings or “baskets”. As she remembered Campiche then recalled how he as a boy had helped his grandmother to assort yarns by shades and colors into various baskets. He therefore suggested doing the same with the various proposals but without prejudicing what could be achieved in substance.

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

The main question was how to call the child. Nobody should be nailed down. Hazards in life. It does not really matter who invented the term but rather that the actual discussion could start after it. We used coded language anyway.

There was a certain fear among Western delegates that the then secretariat could become a future institution. French and Belgians came to say that the Swiss should take care of that catalogue.

### **Thomas Fischer**

It looks as if Geneva is the point where the Neutrals started to co-ordinate more. In Geneva the mutual support among the neutrals started. It was there where they realized that their political weight had to be improved. When did Yugoslavia come into the picture?

### **Franz Ceska**

Neutral co-operation was a process, which gained importance insofar as we realized that we had to create ideas by ourselves as soon as we had understood to join forces. For example – package deal in summer 1974 bringing in relation the preamble of basket 3 and the principle of non-intervention. Negotiation was done by the N+N.

An example of Austria: we had a problem with the Slovene speaking minority in Carinthia which had a negative impact on Austrian-Yugoslavian relations. Particular matter for Yugoslavia when Mr Uzelac came up in the CSCE with a proposal to protect minority rights. It was refused by everybody except Austria. Curious: delegation of Yugoslavia thanked Austria. Positive repercussions on bilateral relations.

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

One way of explaining Finnish behavior: Basic consideration was if it supported our security. Neutrality was nothing else than another word for sovereignty. We were playing foreign policy with two cards – 1st card: declarations to remain in good relations with everybody, neighbors and in particular with SU. Everybody in public position would say this. That's one of the reasons why we were so firm to repeat this in CSCE. 2<sup>nd</sup> card: how we perceived our own risks. Organization of our defense forces was there to see what the Soviets were doing. How did Russians react to this? We also operated on different levels whether bilateral or multilateral. Bilateral affairs were handled by the communist party, they had a special section. Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a minor role. The multilateral sector was different – Finland was part of the Western caucus in the UN, another Western nation pursuing a policy of neutrality. Party people tried from time to time to influence our position (in the CSCE). Russians were not competent enough to follow the whole procedure. This helped Finland. Friends in various delegations assumed that Russians exercised more pressure. In fact, it was less and they did it through Helsinki, not in Geneva. They did it via party people from the Embassy, but were not very successful. In addition, they were behind realities. In archives you won't find papers where this was spelled out.

What was Finland's way to move under the prevailing circumstances? Finns were very careful to choose their people, so that there were minimum linkages, that there were no risks for unauthorized communications. Russians knew very well where the Finnish policy aimed at – to increase our freedom. Russians had an interest in behaving, Finns had an interest to consider what was important to the Russians.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Referring to the previous discussion with Mr Renk. Finland changed her position in the negotiation process between Dipoli and Geneva. Was the careful behavior in Dipoli merely tactical?

**Paavo Keisalo**

We changed from host to a participant.

**Jaakko Iloniemi**

Many assumed this constant pressure of the SU. Therefore, it was important for the Finns to demonstrate that this was not the case. It was our interest not to take stance in controversial issues. We were not just another participant. We had an interest to have the third stage of the negotiations (Final Act) at the highest political level in Helsinki.

**Thomas Fischer**

Did you as delegates of your countries to the CSCE-negotiations make the instructions yourselves? How much freedom was there to create your own diplomacy in Geneva?.

**Jaakko Iloniemi**

We reported on a weekly basis. President Kekkonen knew what was going on although he was not interested in the details. The basic idea of the conference and Helsinki as its venue were important to him. From time to time I reported to him by making visits to his office.

**Thomas Fischer**

How was that for the Swedish delegation?

**Göran Berg**

For Sweden, the situation was less sensitive. We were under instructions but they were not taken on very high level. It was rather a continuous dialogue with the ministry departments. However, there were two areas in which instructions were given on a higher level. Hans Blix (legal advisor of the Foreign Ministry) wanted to make sure that the language used in the conference and part of the language of New York (UN) would not be contradictory. The second major interest was in disarmament and this issue was already being discussed in Geneva.

**Thomas Fischer**

I'd like to know about the influence of personalities. Did the Swedish Prime Minister himself take any special interest?

**Göran Berg**

I would not be aware of a specific interest of Olof Palme during the working phase.

**Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

The responsibility for the negotiations lay with the Foreign Ministry. Here there was no difference between between the predecessor of Palme (Tage Erlander) and Palme himself. But of course Mr. Palme showed a great interest and engagement in the CSCE summit in the summer of 1975.

For us young diplomats, the CSCE was an excellent opportunity to get experience of multilateral diplomacy. I worked in the third basket, mainly in the subcommittees on

culture and education. There we had instructions, but they sometimes they sometimes arrived late or were obsolete when we got them. We did not have the liberty the Austrian and Swiss colleagues described.

### **Markku Reimaa**

Would like to come to the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage. There was a sort of time pressure from Moscow. The crucial question to the key Western delegations was; when is the package substantive enough for approval? First pressure for a closing of the negotiations was there in June 1974. Bilateral and multilateral approaches were made vis à vis Moscow. Intensive dialogue between Moscow and Moscow. Kissinger was concerned that the cohesion and unity of the Western group was at stake. Different priorities in Washington and Brussels. In Moscow there were written statements that after neutral package proposal of summer 1974, Moscow should no longer discuss the neutrality issues of Finland.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

I joined the Yugoslav delegation as the youngest member in 1974. On legal matters I recollect that our delegation acted relatively freely. Ambassador Nincic reported and sent suggestions to Belgrade and these came back as Belgrade's instructions. Ambassador Ceska is perfectly right about that. 1974 the Yugoslavs got a new constitution with more federalistic rights. Referring to the bilateral problems with Austria, we had difficulties to explain to Belgrade that one of the supporters of our minority rights proposal was Austria. Everybody thought we were mistaken. On some matters we had more difficulties since we had to wait for the opinion from the different Republics within the Federation (f.ex. concerning minorities and status of foreign workers).

### **Erwin Schmidl**

Asks whether it is right that some of the issues discussed in basket 3 were outside the realms of foreign relations issues. Would the delegates also get instructions from other Ministries on these issues?

### **Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

When these proposals were made, we realized that we have to consult with and get instructions not only from the MFA but also from other ministries and parties concerned. We got instructions from the Ministry of education f.ex. In fact we had a constant dialogue with them and special reference groups for basket 3 issues were set up with participation of various ministries, institutions and experts. The discussion of these topics at the CSCE even made our Ministry of education get its first telefax in order to get instructions on time.

### **Franz Ceska**

Ahead of each meeting we very carefully prepared the information. Main aim was not so much to follow a line but rather to have a collection of arguments. As soon as negotiations started, we had to act on our own without being able to go back to the ministries all the time.

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

The conference developed a whole language of its own.

### **Göran Berg**

I remember that we had to go back home for instructions.

### **Walter Siegl**

First they checked in the Foreign Ministry in Vienna whether our declarations violated any instructions but then they got overwhelmed by the load of the work and let us do the job.

### **Franz Ceska**

There was also an intensive contact with the media. I spoke a lot with journalists. I remember abundant press coverage at least during the Belgrade and Madrid meetings. But we had no instructions how to negotiate.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

It was similar in the Swiss delegation. We had a military expert in our delegation. Our Foreign Minister Pierre Graber was not very enthusiastic, hesitant in his overall approach to the CSCE but accessible to arguments. We had an issue with the Yugoslavs on foreign workers. The Swiss government was scared because of an upcoming referendum (Schwarzenbach) on the limitation of the foreign population. This was one of few instances where the Delegation had to contact the competent federal office. In the end the question could be kept in basket 2 and was not moved to basket 3.

### **Thomas Fischer**

So it seems that part of the success story why the final act was reached is to be found in the fact that most delegations were acting on their own instructions. Now – Brunner in his book tells a story of the phase in Geneva, that there had been something like a putsch by the second in line of the smaller delegations, he names explicitly Franz Ceska, Jaakko Iloniemi, Ljubivoje Acimovic, himself. I would ask the audience to elaborate on the ‘putsch’ issue.

### **Franz Ceska**

Well, in any case it was never a putsch in my case against Liedermann. We were friends, but different in character. But it is true that I took over some issues for Austria from a certain moment onwards in Geneva and Liedermann let me do it. I was young and ambitious. But there was no atmosphere of any putsch. It is true that myself and others in other delegations took the steering wheel the longer the negotiations went on.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

Acimovic was driving force in basket 1. Our Ambassador Nincic was more distant as a person and was entrusting Acimovic with a lot of work in practical negotiation. Nincic suggested sometimes more flexibility on the issue of national minorities, but left it up to Acimovic to decide. Politically, our head of delegation was not part of the party establishment. He therefore was cautious not to get into troubles with Belgrade. Preferred not to be in front.

I would, like Ambassador Ceska, also say there was no “putsch”.

**Jaakko Itoniemi**

Our delegation from the beginning worked as a team. Had no problems of that kind.

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

Personal incompatibilities are natural but there was a good team spirit. Swiss delegation had a meeting every morning prior to official meetings, a sort of brainstorming.

**Göran Berg**

The Swedish delegation also had similar brainstorming sessions.

**Thomas Fischer**

Maybe we should not stress too much the word ‘putsch’ but what I believe Brunner refers to – and what is to some degree confirmed by your statements – is that there was a certain dynamic coming from the younger members of delegation that gained more influence over time.

Now the issue of the MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction-Talks); It seems that the parallelism of these talks with the CSCE was a crystallizing point for neutrals? Hans-Jörg Renk refers to this discussion as the ‘Birthday’ of the N+N-group within the CSCE?

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

Starting point of N+N cooperation was military discussions. One reason for this was that the military experts of the various delegations had a very good relation amongst them. Swiss position with regard to MBFR – we should at least be informed. We should be able to send an observer to Vienna to see what was happening.

**Göran Berg**

The disarmament issue was on the agenda long before. Conference on security without mentioning military aspects would be strange. But we could not have discussions on disarmament aspects proper.

**Thomas Fischer**

There was a Swedish proposal for transparency of military budgets?

**Göran Berg**

There was the problem of reciprocity. I remember a conversation in the Moscow embassy where Russians talking about ‘balance of power’ said that military budgets of the kind discussed in the CSCE “in our view is a secret and in the West it is not”. Hence in their view the West would gain an advantage.

**Franz Ceska**

Austria followed the same kind of procedures as the other N+Ns with regard to military aspects. Later on in Madrid there was a situation when the Austrian delegation had more profile – finding an East-West-compromise on the so-called “zone formula”. Brunner

thought this to be a matter between the US and SU. I had many hours of discussion with Russians till they came to compromise. The result was a substantive document in Madrid. Nearly led to agreement already in 1981. This was the only instance when we took a major initiative on the military dimension.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

This was the issue along which N+N developed as a group. One of the differences was that neutrals in their philosophy were emphasizing transparency, wanted to be informed on a timely basis on military maneuvers, while Yugoslavs were less insistent on information but tried to introduce certain constraints on military activities. Right to be informed on what was going on in the MBFR talks was another issue. To us the indivisibility of security in Europe was important.

### **Walter Siegl**

Lack of strong military budget led us to rely on CBMs (Confidence Building Measures) and other issues. They were first considered phantom conceptions. Negotiations went on despite a number of near catastrophes between East and West.

### **Göran Berg**

There were different opinions in NATO. One small member of NATO (Norway) hoped that marine affairs would be included in the N+N paper on CBMs, but the major NATO powers did not want this.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Two questions out of curiosity: what about the Kekkonen proposal for a nuclear free zone in Nordic countries and the role of Liechtenstein?

### **Jaakko Itoniemi**

In 1963 the idea was first launched. It was meant more as a gesture than something people would have believed in. Ideas were designed to create a situation where we would be ahead with an idea of our own. A defensive move, so to say, since there was little faith in success. It was meant in order to be able to say to other ideas – ‘we cannot support this, we have an idea of our own’. I do, however, not know about Kekkonen’s deeper ideas about it. Idea was not well received in general.

The idea of organizing a conference on security issues was launched several times in different forms. In 1969 Finland answered to the Soviet Union that we would take part in such a conference if all European countries would participate. We knew this was not likely. Our reply to the Soviet initiative was a defensive one. That is why we made an initiative of our own the same year. Whether or not president Kekkonen believed that such an initiative might bear fruit, I do not know.

### **Thomas Fischer**

That means that idea of a Nordic nuclear free zone was dropped when there was no response.

Now to Liechtenstein – let’s also not forget San Marino, Cyprus.

What impact had these states? Quotation from a British comment:

'Liechtensteins were 'per Du' with Austrians but never with the Swiss'.

### **Franz Ceska**

Remembers Count Gerliczy, Mario Ledebur. His remarks were sometimes slightly bizarre but usually sound. Problems when it came to religious questions – after 1 year a compromise was found between the Soviets and the Holy See with regard to religious freedom. When Mario Ledebur read it he thought this is the end of Christianity. Cyprus and Malta were different – they did not bring a lot of color into the negotiations – except for opposition to the final compromise.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

Remembers Count Ledebur. He was sensitive to commitments to UN documents. I always wondered whether he was acting on Liechtenstein's interest or sometimes also on Swiss interests.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

The Swiss had to get used to the fact that Liechtenstein for the first time participated in an international conference in its own right under the leadership of Prince Heinrich, the brother of the governing Prince, and not as an appendix to Switzerland. It was a learning process for the Swiss that microstates have something to say and should be taken seriously.

## **Panel 3**

14:00 -15:30

### **1973-1975: Geneva Negotiations and Helsinki Summit (Part 2)**

### **Thomas Fischer**

Would like to continue with basket 2, also talk about the deadlocks in Geneva. Group Dynamics of the negotiations are most interesting and can be covered by the participants.

### **Felix Mikl**

Youngest participant in Austrian delegation to Geneva. Economic basket is often called 'the forgotten basket'. Was not in contact with CSCE process after Geneva. Was dealing with basket 2 mostly. It was a surprise to me that I should become delegation member. I was at the time posted to the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations in Geneva, dealing, among other fields, with ECE matters. This helped considerably when entering the discussions in the sub-committees.

2 sides needed to be kept apart – political aspect and purely technical aspect. It was often technical aspects where young delegation members had something to contribute, where we added meat to the bones. Political side was different. We had leeway, no doubt, I agree with Ambassador Ceska. I went again through texts of basket 2. It is very balanced, sentences like in Tacitus. The language is often formalistic. We find one position in the first half of a sentence, whereas in next half sentence the other views are expressed. Rich, what was put into these texts. Concerning instructions: When required, I did have advice on technical questions, mostly originating in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, agreed to

and passed on technically through the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Members of other delegations were working in Geneva in Economic Commission for Europe of the UN before, so close connections were already established. Occasionally I also replaced somebody in basket 1 and 3, which helped me to get a wider perspective of the proceedings.

**Thomas Fischer**

Would like to know about basket 2. How much co-ordination was there among the neutrals?

**Göran Berg**

I personally had nothing to do with basket 2. But reading the provisions of the Final Act now there are passages that nobody would dream of having in a UN text. It was unusual to have such detailed provisions in texts of international organizations. Basket II is really speaking about concrete things concerning people's everyday life, whereas the East usually was focused on general principles and trade.

**Walter Siegl**

Thinks it is not correct that it was called 'forgotten basket'. Very much of SU interest. There is also a lot in it the SU never wanted to fulfill, e.g. access to inland waterways.

**Franz Ceska**

This was also a Kreisky idea – network of waterways. Also Germany did not want it.

**Markku Reimaa**

Basket 2 was important for Finland since more than 20 percent of foreign trade is with SU.

**Otmar Höll**

It was also important for SU because of technological aspects.

**Paavo Keisalo**

Reputation of 'forgotten basket' is wrong. The conference in 1<sup>st</sup> year in Geneva had good success in basket 2. The negotiations were far advanced but we could not finish second basket before the others concluded.

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

Contrary to the bargaining between baskets 1 and 3, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> basket the trade off happened within. One had to balance every word. Preamble of basket 2 was copied from French-Soviet agreement of 1971. In my recollection there wasn't so much co-operation among the neutrals in that basket.

**Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

Does not like the expression 'forgotten basket' either. Basket 2 led a life of its own with negotiations going on in the subcommittees. It dealt to a large extent with issues that had been the subject of both bilateral and multilateral negotiations in i.e. the ECE. There was

also a common interest among all participants to map out and remove obstacles in order to facilitate and increase cooperation and exchange. We made progress. Hence there was less need for coordination by the neutrals.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

There was no common N+N initiative in basket 2. Yugoslavia was in a specific situation. There were divisions in Yugoslavian internal politics. At that time Foreign Minister Mirko Tepavac resigned from his post. He wanted a more European orientation and less emphasis on non-aligned movement. For example, Yugoslav delegation was obliged to add, wherever possible, a clause “taking into account the interests of developing countries”, in order to show that Yugoslavia has not forgotten the non-aligned movement. We had clear instructions on this.

### **Jaakko Itoniemi**

Kekkonen asked me why did president Tito have so much faith in the non-aligned movement. I said that he thought the movement would back up his policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Kekkonen said that Tito must be naïve if he believes that. They tried halfheartedly tricks they knew would not work.

### **Franz Ceska**

About basket 2: had the longest texts and quickest agreements. Practical effects were rather limited. Since Madrid we had yearly Economic forum that dealt i.e. with GATT, and the European integration process. Had always difficulties to raise interest in the business-communities.

### **Otmar Höll**

Wasn't it really the co-operative basket, while basket 1 was the operative basket? SU was interested in getting access to new technology. This was what West wasn't ready to give.

### **Walter Siegl**

He thinks the opposite is true. SU had not made a single proposal in months in basket 2. Till today the Russians do not contribute too much.

### **Paavo Keisalo**

The second basket was full of generalities because the East had nothing concrete to give in return.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Now I would like to discuss basket 3 with a closer look on the package deal in June/July 1974. Maybe also on the discussions on non-intervention in internal affairs.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

With reference to the discussions this morning, I would like to mention the Swiss involvement in the field of information. We wanted something practical, to show our independence beyond Western proposals. The co-ordination role of the Neutrals in basket 3 was to form 4 sub-sections since there were 4 neutrals. It was planned that the East and

West should also take part in coordination (France and GDR). But then it was left to Neutrals. They kept close contacts, made mini package deal. For the Russians, basket 3 was the Blue Book with nothing added. I think the Neutrals did a good job there.

### **Markku Reimaa**

Gives a couple of comments on the character of the baskets. Working stage and final stage should be separated. Individual proposals from the neutrals were coming out without having the group support. For us and Austria it was more the political value of participating in the negotiations itself. In final negotiations it was interesting to see how the key themes were interpreted. N+N states had a common understanding what might be possible. Prior to that text plenty of discussions were going on with reference to the possible sex appeal of the neutral countries policies. UK and US were often afraid N+N contributions could have a weakening effect on the West. This had an impact on the key players. Spain was very close to the Neutrals until Belgrade. Conflicting issues came up with the package deal of 1974; the documents indicate that it was in the original stage a deal between US and SU. But they needed a third country to present it. Russians suggested Finland.

The follow-up was a N+N priority issue. Finland in 1974 proposed a coordinating committee. The necessity of continuity was in the game, regular meetings were the problem. It was rather a step-by-step approach. N+N tried for the follow up After the Helsinki summit Ambassador Iloniemi made an initiative in November 1975 to “institutionalize” the N+N-coordination by inviting the Neutrals to Helsinki in order to continue the coordination of policies and prepare together for Belgrade 1977. Stockholm and Vienna were very hesitant. Swiss had a problem in timing. What was the problem – Sweden and Austria said they wanted to have the next host country Yugoslavia among them. The Swiss were clearly against having other than the four neutrals to meet. The Finns mediated. The initiative was continued and established; the neutrals met in different capitals at political directors’ level.

Last point vis-à-vis Madrid 1980 – from President Carter to President Reagan in US policy no big changes were to be expected. Ambassador Kampelman continued as the head of US delegation to Madrid.

Finland was not part of the N+N-initiative in November 1980 to break the deadlock in the preparatory meeting. We considered that the proposed commitments to follow-up and continuity after Madrid were too weak.

Belgrade in 1977/78 was meant to keep the process alive. We agreed to have several expert meetings before the next meeting in Madrid. These were some sort of substitute for a substantive concluding document.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Would like to come back to basket 3 again, in particular to the impact of the Neutrals and the N+N package deal. Is it correct that the big powers made the deal first?

### **Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

In the beginning we were a bit reluctant to take on the coordination role assigned to us as the issues of basket 3 to a large extent were of pure East-West character, where we like the other neutrals shared the views of the West. But then we saw that we had a role to

play although it was not always a grateful role. But we managed to move on with the drafting stage.

The package deal (in July 1974) was a good example. After lengthy negotiations in which the N+N played an important role we managed to find a solution. The safeguard clauses demanded by the East were moved to basket 1 and the preamble of basket 3 got a general reference to all the principles, which the West accepted as at the time a reference (originally a Swedish request) was made in the tenth principle to internal “laws and regulations” being in conformity with obligations under international law. However, the Russians later came back with new requests, which led to deadlocks on both the Western and Eastern side. They were not settled until the end of June 1975.

**Thomas Fischer**

Did the Neutrals mainly have a coordinating role or were they bringing in the substance?

**Hans-Jörg Renk**

Both, this was the double role I spoke about yesterday.

**Franz Ceska**

When we limited our roles to “go-betweens”, we run into two walls. Succeeded only when we were imaginative. Go-between role led to nowhere.

**Markku Reimaa**

I had a chance to study some of the UK papers and learned that British perceived neutral countries not as neutral players in the basket III issues. We shared the values and objectives with the Western delegations.

**Thomas Fischer**

The package deal – what is the meaning if the deal was done beforehand?  
I see it as a step where the profile of the N+N group was shaped.

**Markku Reimaa**

It was not a one-goal deal, rather a lengthy process, which went back and forth. Key element was the linkage in the preamble of 3<sup>rd</sup> basket with the principles in basket 1, in particular with the sovereign equality and the role of the national legal systems and regulations in the implementation of the commitments made: Reference to the human rights principle statement was not in original draft. This took time to achieve.

**Jaakko Itoniemi**

In early phases of the negotiation process leading up to the package deal the Russians tried to twist us around. We got instructions from Helsinki, which came originally from the Russian Embassy, in fact the Party Secretariat in Moscow and it was channeled through the highest levels. But it was so obvious. Once, after such an attempt to twist President Kekkonen around, I was called home immediately in order to report what was going on in the process. The Russians had complained about the delegates who did not – in the sense of the Russians – properly respond to their complaints. I was prepared to resign since I expected the President to be furious. But the President invited me to lunch

and brandy and suggested to forget about it. President understood that the Russian proposal was a non-starter. It puzzles me because Russia had a very strong delegation. But the delegation was not able to show to Moscow that it was a non-starter. This was amazing and also a clear sign to others.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Is it correct to claim that there was a closer co-ordination of the neutral states in preparation of the follow up meeting in Belgrade? On the origins of that collaboration: In May 1974 Sweden launched an appeal to the neutrals when the negotiations were facing a deadlock. In June 74 the initiative was dropped but they came back to it in December 1974. A first meeting was held at the airport in Zurich where the chief diplomats of the four Foreign Ministries came together. After that this close high-level co-ordination seems to have continued, is it correct?

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

I was there at that first meeting in Zurich-Kloten but do not remember the substance of the talks.

### **Paavo Keisalo**

Basket 4 (Follow up) gave the West the power to decide when progress was to be made. Finland proposed a permanent coordinating committee in order to avoid the risk that one country would stop the whole thing. What we have today is close to this original proposal. Soviets once upon a time had idea about a permanent body.

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

I once asked a French delegate why they were so negative towards the idea of a follow up? He said that much of the CSCE is seen by the Germans as directed against them. The French would not create an institution, which would emphasize that aspect of the process.

### **Franz Ceska**

The totality of the final act of Helsinki was to be published immediately. I was in East Berlin by that time when it was printed in the *Neues Deutschland*, which was sold out at 11 o'clock in the morning. People said Honecker signed, we want to go to West Germany. These effects went beyond what Soviets expected. This was, of course, one of the reasons why Belgrade ended with no significant document. This development changed the situation. The West continued to be reluctant to a follow up, it was only gradually recognized in the West. A follow up was less and less to the liking of the Soviets but they were integrated into the whole process already.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Reminds the audience that while the Final Act was published in its entirety in all the East Bloc countries this was not the case in every Western country.

### **Andreas Oplatka**

In fact, Edouard Brunner was one of the first to push for a follow-up. He invited me to meet since I was skeptical about a follow up with the Eastern countries. Brunner said if

the Final Act is going to be published in the Eastern countries it cannot stay without an impact.

### **Walter Siegl**

Skepticism towards a follow-up was motivated because the Americans were not yet on board. We were also witnessing so many arrests in the SU at the time.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

A story goes that, when the Final Act was published, human rights activists gathered in the center of Sofia. When the police came to disperse them, the protesters claimed that their rights were enshrined in the Final Act. Police allegedly responded - “this is Sofia, not Helsinki!”

### **Christian Nünlist**

The combination of baskets 3 and 4 was one of the best things, as it was already said yesterday. To try for the follow up and the human rights issue gave the West real leverage.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

In fact, the whole negotiations were a learning process. The Swiss officials were very skeptical. The pros in favor of the follow-up were only slightly more convincing than the cons. We could have pushed the idea of a system for the peaceful settlement of disputes, but no direct link was made between the follow-up question and this plan. The turning point in favor of the follow-up came at the end of 1974.

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

The real negotiations started only after June 20<sup>th</sup> 1975 – refers to an article of that time by Acimovic and himself.

France was particularly hesitant to a follow up.

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

As soon as it became clear that basket 3 had something substantial in it, the question was how to support it that it was not in vain. The key was accountability!

### **Markku Reimaa**

I guess Spencer Oliver (who meanwhile had arrived in person) will highlight Belgrade meeting. The Charter 77 had not been mentioned so far. The Eastern delegations could predict where it was leading. Didn't want the follow-up meeting to become a tribunal. Belgrade should be a contribution to détente but not a test of détente in their view. Key to successful continuation was long-term dynamics.

### **Kerstin Asp-Johnsson**

The results that were achieved with the Final Act, especially in the humanitarian field, were far beyond expectations. They were achieved, because the West supported by the Neutrals managed to keep together and insist on positive results. The three-page mandate from Helsinki for basket 3 resulted in 35 pages, partly very detailed recommendations.

These could be compared to the East's original proposal of four pages for the entire basket 3. This showed that the Soviets completely misjudged the will and ability of the West to pursue the basket 3 issues. At the end of the Geneva phase, when we met with journalists, we were accused of deceiving people in the East and creating the illusion that this would all really happen. However, Helsinki committees were soon established in the Eastern countries with reference to the Helsinki Final Act. This set off a process with demands for individual rights and freedoms, which were realized in less than two decades. When it came to follow up, we wanted to see that this process initiated by the CSCE was going on.

### **Göran Berg**

The individual cases came much later. First we wanted to see process go on.

### **Wolfgang Mueller**

Would like to put the consequences of the Helsinki Final Act into a broader perspective. Recent literature says there was a certain impact of the publication in public media on the human rights movement. But in SU the Helsinki movement was again crushed in 1980. I would therefore be cautious with judgments. Question: certain phases when SU delegation was lagging behind, didn't get orders from Moscow. Memoirs of Ambassador Dobrynin - They are referring to a certain situation when they had in Moscow a discussion if they should accept the whole package deal or find a way out. What personal recollections does audience have if such a situation were to happen?

### **Vladimir Bilandzic**

Gives a comment to the comment about the importance of the Final Act in Eastern Europe. You couldn't stop this process even if it was crushed. It was like a flood. In principle, the Final Act enshrined the freedom of individuals to act along individual rights, that persons have a relevant role to play. This was the basis, which legitimized the freedom movements in Eastern Europe even though Final Act was not a legal document. And SU after Helsinki did not dare to intervene in Europe any more. After Helsinki there was Afghanistan intervention, but not in Europe. The dissident movements started to gain strength.

### **Walter Siegl**

Russians have fought with all their might. Russians tried all kinds of excuses like they cannot accept term individual since there is no word for individual in Russian. Mendelewitsch tried to convince them that this is a concept so alien to Russian mind that it cannot be accepted. The issue of civil rights movements came up again and again.

### **Paavo Keisalo**

Mendelewitsch also told us that there is only one word for intervention and interference. For Brezhnev the border agreement was so important that he was prepared to accept anything.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Would like to have a look at Malta. Was its somewhat erratic performance more than an annoyance?

**Jaakko Itoniemi**

Yes, it was. Gromyko advanced the idea consensus minus one when the Malta problem came up first. It was an outrageous position Malta had taken and it was not among the important countries. But consensus minus one was not acceptable since it would have opened the door to a sort of voting system.

**Paavo Keisalo**

At the end of Dipoli we were at the point of dissolving all and start with 34 again – because of Malta’s behaviour.

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

The Soviet delegation in July 1975 raised the question of consensus minus one. The Western countries were firm not to allow this. The Soviets characterized Malta’s position as blackmail to the Conference. Everything was tried to get consensus with Malta. The N+N delegates tried to reach Maltese PM Dom Mintoff (remind you, this was prior to the mobile phone age), but were told by his office that Mintoff was unavailable, since he was “horse riding somewhere in Malta”. This was a real crisis in the N+N group.

**Franz Ceska**

Group had similar problems with Cyprus. They used the same method, tried to block everything in the last moment when it was already agreed on. Usually, the Cypriots never opened the mouth, only at the end they tried to block everything.

**Jaakko Itoniemi**

In British records from the negotiations in Geneva there is point on Malta: Finnish Ambassador could hardly restrain himself from hitting the Maltese delegate.

**Panel 4**

15:30-17:00

**1977-1983: Follow-up meetings in Belgrade and Madrid**

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

(Quotes from an article) SU was favoring Finland instead of Belgrade for the 1<sup>st</sup> follow up meeting but publicly they were not against Belgrade. Cyprus was prepared to officially make the formal proposal in favour of Belgrade. But the Co-ordinating Committee was chaired by Cyprus – and it prevented the proposal to be made by Cypriot delegation. Spain suggested Helsinki. Finland eventually gave in and suggested that it should be Belgrade.

I remember that Belgrade was not technically prepared. We did not have a conference hall for that. Same problem as Helsinki had earlier on. A conference center was built in short time; it was a push for Belgrade and Yugoslavia and it was highly appreciated to be

host of 1<sup>st</sup> follow up meeting. It was the place where the issue of implementation was put on the CSCE agenda.

### **Franz Ceska**

Vienna was not in the picture for 1<sup>st</sup> follow up.

### **Jaakko Iloniemi**

Why did the Finns give up? We tried to hijack the whole thing. Fairly early, Finns were told by the British that it was not a good idea to push for Helsinki. Politically, there were good reasons to support Belgrade.

### **Hans-Jörg Renk**

Switzerland supported Belgrade for political reasons. Because Tito was already 83 years old and it was perceived as a possible threat that Soviets might get strange ideas once he was gone. It was not said openly, certainly not in meetings. Some Swiss diplomats hoped that one day Yugoslavia would join the Neutrals.

### **Franz Ceska**

He likes to speak about the follow up meetings in their political context – about Belgrade and Madrid. In which political situation did they take place? Some effects of the Helsinki Final Act within Warsaw Pact countries became visible. This in reverse, raised the interest of the West. From Soviet side on the contrary, the interest in such a debate decreased. Implementation and new measures had to be brought into a framework during the preparatory meetings. The most interesting talks though were in the end of preparatory meetings for Belgrade. Procedural matters were political key questions. In Belgrade, we finally reached agreement on a rather short document – more a telegram. But the follow up was guaranteed. Before Madrid, the situation was different since East-West relations had deteriorated. It was a much more explosive political situation. It took the negotiations to the brink of a breakdown. Also the two different perceptions became clear. In the West there were some who said ‘we see that the Soviets do not comply with the Final Act, why should we go on with new commitments, which will not be respected, either?’ That was the view of the US, British, Dutch. But N+N had different views. They said the disrespect should not be a reason to dismiss the East in the future.

Some viewed CSCE process as a mirror of East-West relations. Others – most of the Europeans – perceived the CSCE process as instrumental to a change.

The follow up meetings were fascinating since they indicated a change. But we did not foresee how fast change really went. As of Belgrade, but in particular in Madrid, the media was more important. Delegations worked with the media. This had in itself a certain effect on the CSCE process. Altogether, Belgrade was in a delicate situation, Madrid even more. In Madrid political events outside influenced the course of the negotiations – Afghanistan, Poland. It was a miracle that Madrid ended as it ended since there was always the danger of a total breakdown looming.

### **Thomas Fischer**

Is it thinkable that Soviets really went away?

**Franz Ceska**

Yes, if the West, esp. the US could be held responsible for it, absolutely.

**Thomas Fischer**

Didn't Belgrade show the limits to N+N contributions?

Turning point was in Madrid. How did the group come around?

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

I was not present in the final stage in Madrid. Belgrade was held relatively soon after the Final Act. To expect a substantive document from Belgrade was quite unrealistic. The Carter administration came into power with emphasis on human rights. They really wanted to have a debate on human rights issue. The Eastern bloc was not really interested in a substantial document. They had to first digest the Helsinki Final Act. Denmark came with small draft from the West. The Yugoslav efforts were not unnoticed. Irish delegation mentioned that they appreciated N+N activities and that Ireland would have liked to see their draft adopted. The N+N activities are most characteristic of Belgrade meeting.

**Markku Reimaa**

In fact, the margins for maneuvering in Belgrade were very limited but the human rights proposal was the *conditio sine qua non*. This point of departure was not very promising.

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

Head of the Soviet delegation, Yuli Vorontsov, replied with – ‘I couldn't care less’ to a statement by a US Congress woman on the occasion of Human Rights Day in December 1977 when she reminded that the US had never recognized the forcible incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR. In 1991 when these states got back their independence, it was worth remembering these statements made almost fifteen years earlier.

**Thomas Fischer**

Was there a changing US attitude in Belgrade? Were the US delegates aware that by taking a controversial line they risked a breakdown of the whole process?

**Spencer Oliver**

We knew very well that there would be a confrontation in Belgrade. There was also a fight between the State Department and the Congressional Commission on Helsinki set up by Dante Fascell. Kissinger told Dobrynin (then Soviet Ambassador to Washington) not to grant visas to the Commission to go to Moscow. This changed when the Carter Administration came in. Carter won the 1976 election also because Ford had said in the campaign “Poland is a relatively free country.” This mobilized the Eastern European diaspora in the US, especially in States like Ohio and Illinois, which used to vote for the Republicans, now in favour of the Democrats. After the election, Robert Dole said they lost the election because these States had shifted to the Democrats. In December 1976, the incoming Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, gave a Black tie Dinner for Roy Jenkins (then President of the EC Commission) in New York. One of Cyrus Vance's people called Dante Fascell and invited him. Vance and Fascell had never met before, but they became best friends and Vance agreed to everything Fascell proposed. Thus, the Helsinki

commission was integrated into the US-delegation to Belgrade. The Commission had the opportunity to influence Carter's human rights policy and Oliver managed to include a sentence on human rights into Carter's inaugural address.

Vance wanted to make the human rights issue the most important for Belgrade. To the US, the Helsinki Final Act was nothing if it were not implemented. A major effort was taken to make that the main objective for the US foreign policy.

**Thomas Fischer**

What was the reaction to that in the N+ N states? How did they perceive the new American role?

**Markku Reimaa**

We were expecting that something new will come up. Mendelewitsch's attempt was to have a comprehensive offer to control things in advance. There was a common understanding that the meeting will run in a constructive way. But it might change. Finnish tried to avoid that it will become a "tribunal". Had a draft for a document.

**Franz Ceska**

Austria's view was different to US. We did not think that the Helsinki Act was useless if not implemented because we immediately noticed the impact in Central and Eastern Europe. Diverging effects, but effects. We wanted these effects to continue. CSCE process meant managing the change of the East.

**Thomas Fischer**

Was that still the mood when you left Belgrade?

**Franz Ceska**

We were happy that follow up was safe. There was convergence of interests between the US and the SU for diverging motives, of course. In that case it was OK.

**Vladimir Bilandzic**

We were in the position of a host country. Not much criticism on American insistence on human rights. We did not want to blame it on any country. Belgrade was not perceived as a failure. I am grateful to Hans-Jörg Renk's statement, that there was a Swiss concern about the future of Yugoslavia at that time.

**Thomas Fischer**

Asks Mr Oliver again about N+N efforts: Were they taken seriously?

**Spencer Oliver**

We had instructions for a thorough review and continuation of review process within a reasonable time and refused the Soviet proposal of December 1977 in Belgrade to stop reviewing and start drafting a new document. US never thought that there was any danger that SU would break up the CSCE. Brezhnev had invested too much. It was almost impossible to break away.

**Thomas Fischer**

In Madrid, we heard, there was that danger. Is this correct?

**Franz Ceska**

If we talk about a possible break up, there was that danger, always provided that US took responsibility for breaking it up.

**Spencer Oliver**

Our objective was to fight the ideological struggle and we were going to win. US delegate Arthur Goldber didn't take telephone calls from others than the President, not even from Vance or Fascell. He wanted to get to the Belgrade meeting. He was quite pleased.

**Thomas Fischer**

Did he see the N+Ns as a group?

**Spencer Oliver**

I don't remember. There was a contact person with the N+N. A crucial moment was in Dec.1977 when Voronzov tried to bring the meeting to the next stage of drafting a new document before ending the review of the implementation of the Final Act. US rejected that. Delegates did not agree that you could raise any subject at any time. US was alone in that position.

**Markku Reimaa**

I have a copy from a message our delegation has sent to Helsinki. With reference to human rights issues, that there was no real break through in sight. There was a lot of gossiping what N+Ns are going to do. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> basket there were no Neutrals. Helsinki was criticized by Moscow. Goldberg from US said that the Finns were behaving irresponsibly. So, there was criticism from both sides.

**Thomas Fischer**

There was there a clear preparation along N+N lines, but with the Belgrade experience the N+N saw that the line is given by the big power states.

**Franz Ceska**

Remembers the opening of the Madrid session. The Swiss had the impression that games are played between US and SU. This role I found too boring, I wanted to influence things. Madrid was a never-ending story. To achieve something under the then outside circumstances – Poland, Afghanistan, it was clear, that it would be very difficult. There was a certain danger of a breakdown if SU could make the West responsible for it. Had we not come to more than Belgrade, the next meeting after in Madrid would have been jeopardized. Also we tried to give the impression to people in the East that the process was not stagnant.

**Markku Reimaa**

Via Peking we got indications what Russia expected from Madrid. Kissinger and Goldberg advised US delegate Max Kampelman, who was not at all familiar with the CSCE, not to go to Madrid, but Vice-President Mondale appealed to him to go to there. He insisted to have the human rights approach. When Reagan came, Finns understood that only in the early months of 1981 the disarmament mandate was addressed in a serious manner and it became one important element of the substantive outcome from Madrid.

**Thomas Fischer**

Where was the turning point in Madrid. Can it be specified?

**Spencer Oliver**

The US were criticized for their performance in Belgrade. How to prevent that again was the question. There was a big fight who was going to be the head of delegation. Carter called his attorney general to ask him to be head of delegation. Helsinki Commission wanted a political party. SU gave up, they knew it was going to happen. We took every accusation the SU made on individual cases in the US and investigated. When we came back to Madrid, we had a thick book where everything was laid down. SU was in the defensive. US said, 'we answered all your questions, so answer ours'. This was a stunning moment in an opening ceremony.

**Franz Ceska**

The N+N came into play again. In summer of 1981 negotiations did not progress very much. Zone question (in CBM's) was the main conflicting point. I went to Vienna without much hope for Madrid. Asked Ursula Plassnik to draft a comprehensive document and presented it in September 1981, which was submitted as a N+N-proposal. There was a lot of criticism but altogether the changes for agreement on the N+N-paper were good. Then Poland happened. US didn't want to agree to anything unless it was clear what was happening in Poland. When we asked about Poland they said 'oh nothing, just water canons'. Soon after martial law was proclaimed in Poland. At some point, NATO Foreign Ministers came to make statements in Madrid. The French Foreign Minister Cheysson couldn't talk. West wanted to interrupt for 9 months. At the end of Madrid, we had a much better document than we expected.

**Spencer Oliver**

There were long periods of silence in the meetings. I do remember once went on for a long weekend. Finally Russians gave up and agreed to postpone for 9 months.

**Franz Ceska**

The Russians gave up but they wanted a face saving exit.

**Walter Siegl**

I would like to state that interestingly enough the border question was not picked up in our discussion.

**Thomas Fischer**

Other subjects were not dealt with, either, due to a strict time schedule. Discussion has to come to an end. Would like to thank all contributors for your participation in what has been an interesting day of discussion.

*Protocol*  
*Irene Etzersdorfer*