The First CSCE Human Dimension Seminar: Tolerance

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Introduction
From 16 to 20 November 1992 the first CSCE Human Dimension Seminar took place in Warsaw. The mandate for this seminar, devoted to the issue of tolerance, was laid down in the Helsinki 1992 Document "The Challenges of Change." It constitutes one of the elements of the new institutional structure of the human dimension of the CSCE, as determined by the Helsinki Follow-up Meeting (FUM) from March to July 1992 and the subsequent Helsinki Summit on 9 and 10 July last year. This first Seminar reflected both the advantages and the weaknesses of this new institution. It is evident that particular attention should be given to the weak points in order to avoid a development which could lead to the seminars becoming more or less meaningless.

The Institutional Structure of the CSCE Human Dimension
Up until 1992 the human dimension of the CSCE was intensively discussed at three meetings of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE (CHD). These meetings were held in Paris (1989), Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991). The latter two meetings, which took place after the revolutionary events in Eastern Europe, resulted in the adoption of the Copenhagen Report and the Moscow Document which contained an impressive set of very detailed rules and principles on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The general opinion was that in this way the process of standard setting had achieved its main purpose and that subsequently the emphasis should be on the implementation of the norms agreed upon. This constituted the starting point for the negotiations at the Helsinki FUM which resulted in a blueprint for the follow-up of the CHD. This follow-up consists of two elements. In the first place, implementation issues will be addressed specifically at the biannual CSCE review conferences (the next one is scheduled for 1994 in Budapest); in every year in which a review conference does not take place, a three-week meeting at expert-level will be organized "to review implementation of CSCE Human Dimension commitments". In the second place, human dimension seminars will be organized "which will address specific questions of particular relevance to the Human Dimension and of current political concern". These seminars will not exceed one week's duration. Both the implementation

meetings and the seminars "will not produce a negotiated document". In relation to the seminars it was also stipulated that they are not entitled to produce "follow-up programmes". In Helsinki the CSCE states decided on the organization of four seminars on tolerance, on migration, on national minorities and on the media which will be held before the end of 1993. In 1994 seminars on migrant workers and on local democracy are scheduled.

The Course of the Seminar
In the following analysis of the course of the Human Dimension Seminar on Tolerance I will focus on its relevance for the CSCE Process both in organizational and substantive terms. For the sake of brevity, however, I will not deal with all the substantive issues connected with the main subject of the seminar as such.

Participants
According to the Helsinki 1992 Document, the human dimension seminars "will be organized in an open and flexible manner". This is further elaborated as follows: "Relevant international organizations and institutions may be invited to attend and to make contributions. So may NGOs (non-governmental organizations) with relevant experience. Independent experts attending the seminar as members of national delegations will also be free to speak in their own capacity".

It is beyond any doubt that the way in which this first Warsaw Seminar was organized was fully in conformity with these provisions. Both independent experts and representatives of intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations were treated as equal to the members of the official national delegations. Moreover, the composition of the national delegations also reflected the 'open and flexible' approach: a great number of national delegations encompassed not only Foreign Office representatives, but also experts who were apparently completely free to express their own views. This 'freedom to speak' was even reflected in an open disagreement between the two members of the Uzbekistan delegation at a session of one of the discussion groups concerning the issue of the unhindered access of Russian television programmes on Uzbekistan territory. At the same time, however, it has to be observed that several delegations were composed again only of

4. Paragraphs 11 and 20 of chapter VI of the Helsinki Decisions.
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6. The issue at stake was the question whether Russian television should be tolerated in Uzbekistan. The representative of the Uzbekistan Foreign Office expressed the view that Russian television should be banned because of its 'pornographic' programmes. In contrast, the second member of the Uzbekistan delegation, a journalist, adhered to the view that Russian television programmes contain the most objective information which may be received in Uzbekistan. In order to complete this 'story', it has to be added that the Russian delegate responded by recommending that children should go to bed on time; in addition, he said that Russian television does not transmit pornography, in any case no "hard stuff", at times when children may be watching television.