

A New Era for Europe

More Work Ahead

American and European hopes for a stable post-Cold War order are riding on the 34-nation summit conference that opened on Monday in Paris. It could be another Congress of Vienna, which ended the Napoleonic era in 1815 and ushered in nearly half a century of peace in Europe. Or it could be another Paris Peace Conference, which concluded World War I in 1919 but produced an uneasy truce that lasted a scant 20 years.

To meet the higher standard, and truly open a new chapter of peace, the conferees will have to do more than endorse agreements already arrived at to cut military forces and unite Germany. They must lay the foundations for a new collective security organization, one that fully engages the United States and the Soviet Union politically, while disengaging them militarily.

Some of the tasks confronting the summit meeting — known formally as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe — are relatively easy. For example, it has needed only ratify the agreement to cut conventional forces, which in a stroke eliminates the threat of sudden attack that has hung over Europe since 1945. Still, too much military hardware remains. And no limits have been put on most states' manpower. NATO, for example, will realize only small savings from modest force cuts. It would benefit from deeper weapons and manpower cuts and more constraints on mobilization. That is a task for further

talks, possibly under the CSCE umbrella. The CSCE could also play a useful role in monitoring treaty compliance. Through a Center for the Prevention of Conflicts to be established this week, it will also monitor and discuss "unusual military activity" that could endanger the new stability.

A more robust collective security role is obviously worth exploring. During the Cold War, even if conflicts did erupt into war, as between Greece and Turkey, the alliance system contained them and kept other states from becoming embroiled. As national tensions rise, the CSCE will be asked to help resolve disputes and even keep the peace.

The need to address the domestic causes of conflict is even more urgent. Economic aid and investment can help the fledgling democracies of Eastern Europe through the hard times ahead and take the edge off nationalism. And by signing and implementing a declaration of principles, a Magna Carta for the new Europe, the CSCE could help guarantee the rights of national minorities and the inviolability of borders while permitting the movement of people, goods and ideas across them.

More and more Europeans are coming to believe in a Europe in which shared values conquer national differences, conflicts between states are resolved without war and a common market keeps borders from becoming barriers. If this idea of Europe is to prove more powerful than national passions, the CSCE will have to do its part.

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