

Statement by Nuño Aguirre de Cárcer at the consultations prior to the establishment of the CSCE (5 December 1972)

Caption: Statement made on 5 December 1972 by the Spanish Ambassador to Helsinki, Nuño Aguirre de Cárcer, during the consultations in Helsinki on the question of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to emphasise the importance of the Mediterranean Basin for European security.

Source: Archivo General del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación, Madrid. R019877. Exp. 6.

Copyright: (c) Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores y de Cooperación de España

URL:

http://www.cvce.eu/obj/statement_by_nuno_aguirre_de_carcer_at_the_consultations_prior_to_the_establishment_of_the_csce_5_december_1972-en-3eacea6f-0c74-4440-81b0-ec9701057c0b.html

Last updated: 19/02/2014

December 5th, 1972

ENGLISH

Original: SPANISH

HELSINKI CONSULTATIONS ON THE
QUESTION OF A CONFERENCE ON
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

STATEMENT BY THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR,
DON NUÑO AGUIRRE DE CARCER.

Mr. Chairman:

1.- On behalf of the Spanish Government I wish to express our sincerest thanks to the Government of Finland for the generous efforts which they have undertaken and which have made possible these multilateral preparatory talks on the question of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. In adding my personal thanks to this expression of gratitude, I want to congratulate very warmly our Chairman, Mr. Tötterman, whose tact and diligence are known and appreciated by us all. And in my congratulations, Mr. Chairman, I wish to include all of your co-workers and, in particular, Ambassador Pekuri, who is so efficiently directing the technical services of this meeting.

2.- The opening of these consultations has been a source of genuine satisfaction to us, since from the very moment we received the first formal proposal for the possible calling of a Conference on European security, Spain has held to the view that any action entailing a detailed examination, in historical perspective, of the problems constituting a barrier to normal cooperation among the countries of Europe must receive favourable consideration on our part.

The consultations at which we are gathered today have been made possible thanks to the efforts of many States, in the course of previous bilateral contacts, which have allowed us to gain better knowledge of the various positions here present while creating an atmosphere conducive to the inception of these talks.

- 2 -

We can all take satisfaction from the fact that in the course of recent months a series of agreements of historical significance have been reached in central Europe which have made a substantial contribution toward reducing the causes of tension on our continent. We are therefore beginning our work under very good auspices indeed.

3.- We dare not fail to avail ourselves of this opportunity to work in common toward the goal of confirming détente within the context of security and in this way consolidating peace.

The Conference could become a means of reaching beyond the precarious security system of the present. Through concerting our wills we should be able to constitute a rich fund of common principles and of mutual respect which could become -among our States- the living expression of trust, which is the essence of security.

4.- The scope of the Conference should cover everything affecting security and cooperation in Europe. Security and cooperation are but two sides of the same coin, for security presupposes the existence of a minimum degree of stability which in turn is a function of the progress and development that we seek to attain through cooperation.

In facing this task we cannot limit ourselves to vague and impractical statements, however well-intentioned these might be. We should rather strive to obtain concrete and practical results, without fearing to approach questions which, at first view, may appear difficult of solution. It is evident that the Conference cannot hope to solve all of the problems that remain for Europe to settle. It is fitting for us, however, at this first occasion on which we raise these questions in a collective manner, to do so with genuine interest, with generosity and with realism.

- 3 -

5.- Let us take as our point of departure the existence in Europe of different social and economic systems, and seek certain guiding principles -which all are prepared to observe- that will allow relations between participating States to develop on a basis of complete normalcy and mutual confidence.

Among these principles, to be studied in detail in due course of time, we wish to highlight the following: non recourse to the threat, or use, of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State; prohibition of any form of interference or coercion, direct or indirect, in internal affairs; respect of the cultural and historical traditions particular to each State; peaceful solution of disputes between States in accordance with International law, with possible consideration of the appropriateness of establishing a specific system to that end.

6.- It is obvious that a security conference cannot completely ignore military questions. The Conference should establish certain principles of military security which can apply to the entire European area. Similarly, certain military measures which are likely to promote mutual confidence should be decided upon. By way of example, we might cite the prior notification of manoeuvres and of major troop movements; the presence of observers from neighbouring countries, etc.

From the Conference should emerge an impetus for the holding of future talks concerning a reduction of forces in one or another given area of Europe. We cannot remain aloof of the progress made by such conversations, as they will unavoidably affect the overall strategic balance in which we are all involved.

7.- From the political and military aspects of security, we now turn to the broad topic of cooperation as an instrument of development which, as has been aptly put, "is the new name of peace".

In the first place, the Conference should decide upon measures to promote cultural cooperation in the broadest sense of the term with a view to bringing all European peoples together. These should include greater mutual knowledge of history, literature, arts and traditions, as well as more frequent and continued contacts between persons in such a way as to broaden in both directions the main currents of tourism that now contribute so greatly to mutual respect between nations. All barriers should be gradually removed which impede a rapprochement between peoples.

Cooperation in the economic sphere should endeavour to attain greater freedom of trade and a greater volume of exchange among European nations which must result in rising standards of living for our peoples. Solutions must also be found not only to technical problems, but also to the human ones which are a corollary of economic development. Among these a major position is occupied by movements of migratory labour.

Cooperation must also cover the transfer of technology, and applied and pure science. Nor should we neglect the new field of collective action constituted by the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources.

8.- There can remain no doubt that the guiding political and security principles which are to prevail in the relations between States and in the spheres of cooperation which the Conference intends to promote should encompass the continent of Europe in its entirety: including its land areas, coastal regions, islands and seas.

Spain is both an Atlantic and a Mediterranean country, placed by geography precisely at the gateway between both seas. In her hands both history and geopolitics have placed the custody of the Western entry to the "Mare Nostrum". For this reason we are very sensitive to events in this area and very much aware of its fundamentally European character.

Everything that is decided in respect of security in Europe will have a direct bearing on the Mediterranean basin. Conversely, all events in the Mediterranean area also directly affect the entire European continent.

- 5 -

We should also bear in mind that the Mediterranean is the great pathway of communications from Europe to two other continents and that it is the gateway for the entry of goods which the economy of Europe require for its present needs and future development. It is thus in our own interest to be aware of these realities in shaping the structure of security in Europe and in organizing cooperation in all the above mentioned fields.

We fully comprehend the quite logical interest expressed by the countries of the southern Mediterranean shores in the forthcoming discussions of the Conference that we are now preparing. We therefore feel that we should demonstrate our receptiveness to the special viewpoints which those countries wish to contribute to our work, and provide appropriate means for their voices to be heard.

I should be remiss in my duty in discussing this subject, in view of the urgency of the matter, were I to fail here to refer to a burning problem which, at the very gates of Europe, is a cause of serious instability in the eastern Mediterranean area and a source of continuous and dangerous deterioration of the situation in the Near East, being at the same time a cause of real and present injury to Europe. As a very minimum of action this problem requires that we add our efforts to those of the international organisations in favour of the implementation of a just and lasting solution.

Spain, looking outward from her Atlantic coasts, from the Gulf of Biscay to the Canary Islands, cannot lose sight of those nations which, on the American continent, share the culture and way of life which Spain and Europe have taught them. A peaceful Europe should continue to transmit its culture, science and technology to the Ibero-American nations, thereby supplementing and harmonizing bilateral relations by means of a fruitful and permanent dialogue with this group of nations, a fertile offshoot and a promising hope for our own civilization.

Last, not least, Europe must open her windows to the rest of the world. Only those societies will survive in the end which are not inward looking, but which, with faith and generosity, go out of their way to assist others. We European countries have a special collective obligation toward those peoples of other continents whose needs we know to be of greatest urgency.

- 6 -

9.- To return to the subject of our present consultations, their basic objective is to open the way for the calling of the Conference by means of presenting to our Governments a number of recommendations: on the conditions and proceeding of future work; on the establishment of an agenda accepted by all and which spells out with sufficient clarity the items to be dealt with; also on the appropriate venue and the most opportune opening date.

The very satisfactory conditions under which our present consultations are progressing are a further consideration leading us to pronounce ourselves in favour of accepting the Finnish Government's offer to hold in Helsinki the Conference at ministerial level. In the light of the present rate of progress of our work, such a Conference should be able to start at the beginning of next summer. That phase could then be followed by a phase of work in Committees which could in turn submit their definitive texts to a further ministerial session.

As in the present consultations, we believe that such a Conference should be attended, under conditions of strict equality and irrespective of blocks and alliances, by all European States, together with the United States of America and Canada, intimately linked to the continent by their firm commitment to shared responsibility in security matters.

10.- The expectations awakened throughout the world by the idea of a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe must increase our sense of responsibility. In order not to deceive these hopes and through the seriousness of our work we should aspire to attain that the guiding principles and the basis of cooperation to be laid down in the Conference may one day appear as a rule and an example of worldwide scope.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

- o - o - o - o -