

## Resolution 654 (1977) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (29 April 1977)

**Caption:** Since the nineteen Member States of the Council of Europe are signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe considers, in this Resolution of 29 April 1977, that they must all follow up the several provisions of the Final Act, individually and collectively, fully using the opportunities offered by the competent international organisations.

**Source:** Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Resolution 654 (1977) on the implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. [ON-LINE]. [Strasbourg]: Council of Europe, [02.02.2004]. Available on

<http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=http%3A%2F%2Fassembly.coe.int%2FDocuments%2FAdoptedText%2Fta77%2FBRES654.pdf>.

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**Publication date:** 04/09/2012

## **Resolution 654 (1977)<sup>1</sup> of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the implementation of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe**

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its positions of principle on the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe expressed in its Recommendations 692 (1973), 729 and 739 (1974), in Resolutions 588, 595 (1975) and 625 (1976), and in Order No. 352 (1975) inviting the competent committees to undertake a detailed analysis of the Final Act of the CSCE and to report to the Assembly ;
2. Considering that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the follow-up to its Final Act, signed by the thirty-five participating states of Europe and North America at Helsinki on 1 August 1975, can give a new dimension to East-West relations and are essential parts of détente ;
3. Aware of the fact that the aims and motives behind the Final Act as well as the methods to implement it are not identical in all participating states ;
4. Emphasising, however, the importance that the implementation of the Final Act in its entirety should improve relations between states with different economic and political systems, and facilitate mutual understanding between peoples,
5. Hopes that its general debate in April 1977, with the participation of all the Assembly committees concerned, enabling a preliminary report to be drawn up on the implementation of the Final Act, will have made a parliamentary contribution to the preparation of the Belgrade meetings which, in 1977, will evaluate the first stage of the follow-up to the Helsinki agreements :
  - a. by reminding the governments of the participating states of their solemn commitments and by informing them of the opinion of European members of parliaments ;
  - b. by informing the public in more complete and more realistic fashion of the practical scope of the Helsinki agreements and of the political situation before the Belgrade meetings ;

### **With regard to the principles guiding relations between participating states**

6. Puts the participating states on guard against differing applications of the principles guiding mutual relations, at the risk of increasing dissension between socio-political systems ;
7. Considers that there is no alternative to détente as a basic principle on which any development of security and co-operation in Europe depends, provided it is applied on a reciprocal basis ;
8. Considers that the principles of the inviolability of frontiers, the territorial integrity of states, and abstention from the threat or use of force are stabilising factors in Europe, on condition that the principles of sovereign equality, the rights inherent in the sovereignty of states, and the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples are respected ;
9. Welcomes the recognition of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Helsinki signatory states, which confirm the right of the individual to know and to act upon his rights and duties in this field,
  - a. convinced that there exists no law higher than that of the freedom and dignity of the individual,

b. and recalling that there is no room for bias in the defence of human rights, which must apply everywhere in the same fashion, irrespective of political and social systems ;

10. Expresses the hope that the work on the “draft Convention on a European System for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes” may continue soon and lead to the adoption of a treaty between all states concerned ;

11. Expresses the hope that all states signatories to the Final Act will become parties to, and observe the international covenants on economic, social and cultural rights, and on civil and political rights ;

### **With regard to confidence-building measures and certain aspects of security and disarmament**

12. Considers that opportunities for making unilateral or reciprocal moves for establishing confidence have not yet been sufficiently exploited ;

13. Notes and regrets a certain recrudescence on both sides in verbal attacks against certain allegedly aggressive intentions of participants in the Helsinki Conference ;

14. Stresses the political importance of all attempts to reconcile differences of interest with the predominant concern for security, while

a. recognising that some progress has been made in the notification of military manoeuvres and the exchange of observers, and in the agreement reached in the MBFR negotiations in Vienna to make a detailed study of the discrepancies in troop figures, such progress constituting a first modest step towards openness in military affairs and helping to dispel the myth that secrecy is necessarily an asset for the security of states, and

b. supporting the demand for a reduction in spending on armaments and a corresponding increase in aid to developing countries, on the basis of reciprocity and adjustment between states of East and West ;

### **With regard to co-operation in the field of economics**

15. Considers that the economic interests of Eastern European and Western states are to a large extent of a complementary nature which calls for an intensified bilateral and multilateral co-operation between the two groups of states, and a further improvement of facilities for business contacts and industrial and economic cooperation ;

16. Recognises that some progress, however little, has been made in the implementation of the Final Act in the field of economics ;

17. Invites the governments of the Council of Europe member states to promote economic cooperation with the Eastern European countries on the basis of a fair balance of advantages and obligations ;

18. Considers that Eastern European countries should give priority to the improvement of the quality and timeliness of economic and commercial information, and of access to such information, in particular with regard to changes and planned changes in national legislation on foreign trade, the conditions of industrial co-operation and economic statistics ;

19. Expresses the hope that measures will be taken bilaterally or multilaterally with a view to improving the possibilities for commercial arbitration in Europe ;

20. Considers that ECE can play an important role in the harmonisation of statistics and nomenclature, and in the creation of a multilateral system for the notification of legislation concerning foreign trade ;

21. Expresses the opinion that ECE is the appropriate framework for the discussion and carrying out of multilateral projects in the fields of energy, transport and the environment ;

#### **With regard to co-operation in the field of science and technology**

22. Recalls Order No. 357 (1976), in which it instructed its Committee on Science and Technology to establish regular contacts between officials in charge of scientific affairs throughout Europe and to enable research workers from socialist countries to attend scientific conferences so as to be in a better position to facilitate the development of scientific and technical co-operation in Europe ;

23. Considers that scientific and technical cooperation has become a regular feature of international life, independent of existing social systems, serving the interests of peoples and their economic development, the pursuit of which requires goodwill and perseverance ;

24. Considers that encouraging results have already been achieved in the field of scientific and technological co-operation thanks to initiatives on the part of international organisations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Unesco and the Council of Europe, in addition to purely university initiatives, and that these initiatives and actions have afforded a practical approach to the problems of co-operation at European level ;

25. Instructs its Committee on Science and Technology to pursue its work in accordance with Order No. 357 (1976) and, while welcoming the initial results obtained, encourages it to increase its endeavours and initiatives to strengthen scientific and technological co-operation among all the states of Europe ;

#### **With regard to co-operation in the fields of the environment, communications and regional planning**

26. Considers that the objectives of environmental co-operation should be approached in a pragmatic frame of mind, and that priority should be given to protecting major water courses crossing through several Western and Eastern European countries, such as the Danube, and to combating transfrontier air pollution ;

27. Welcomes, in this connection, East-West collaboration in protecting the Baltic Sea, and is satisfied to note the exemplary co-operation which has recently developed between Yugoslavia, Austria and Italy in the fields of regional planning, tourism and nature conservation, and which made possible the recent Osimo agreement between Italy and Yugoslavia concerning the frontier region of Trieste ;

28. Believes that these examples prove that practical co-operation is feasible between countries having different political systems, and expresses the hope that other efforts, such as those frequently emanating from local and regional authorities, will lead to other achievements in frontier areas, and more particularly to exchanges and meetings of individuals in the spirit of Helsinki ;

#### **With regard to economic and social aspects of migrant labour**

29. Emphasises the importance which it attaches to the reunification of families of migrant workers ;

30. Urges immigration and emigration countries to undertake measures of economic co-operation which will reduce unemployment in the countries of origin of migrant workers ;

31. Expresses the hope that all countries concerned will ratify the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention 1975 (No. 143) of the International Labour Organisation, and in particular its second part, in accordance with the Assembly's Resolution 632 (1976) ;

32. Urges all states concerned to take measures, in particular by means of bilateral or multilateral agreements, to regulate the conditions of migration for employment, and to protect the interests of migrant workers and their families ;

### **With regard to questions relating to security and co-operation in the Mediterranean**

33. Recalls the chapter of the Final Act dealing with the Mediterranean, and urges all signatory states to further, by specific measures, relations with non-participating Mediterranean states, with the object of increasing the security and stability in that region ;

34. Suggests that new initiatives be worked out for projects to develop the infrastructure and economic growth of the Mediterranean states participating and non-participating in the CSCE, and on the multilateral financing of these projects ;

### **With regard to co-operation in humanitarian and other fields**

#### **Human contacts**

35. Attaches particular importance to the steady progression in the number of persons permitted to emigrate or to travel outside their own countries for family, personal or professional reasons ;

36. Observes that there have been certain slight improvements in the conditions for the movement of persons between East and West Europe in the last two years ;

37. Calls for the avoidance of all arbitrary measures, especially those based on religious or ethnic considerations, to obstruct or interfere with the movement of persons between countries ;

#### **Information**

38. Stresses the vital role of the international free flow of written, broadcast and audio-visual information in promoting mutual understanding between peoples ;

49. Also stresses the need for freedom to operate for those who work in the mass media, deploring setbacks in the process initiated after 1 August 1975 whose aim was to facilitate the work of foreign correspondents ;

### **With regard to co-operation and exchanges in the field of culture and education**

40. Recognises that, in the cultural field, the East-West dialogue must aim to achieve the following five objectives set out in the preamble to the relevant section of the Final Act :

- a. the development of the mutual exchange of information so that each may know more about the other's cultural achievements ;
- b. the improvement of facilities for the exchange and dissemination of cultural policy ;
- c. the promotion of access for all to the cultural achievements of others ;
- d. the development of contacts and co-operation between individuals involved in cultural activities, and
- e. the search for new fields and forms of cultural co-operation ;

41. Affirms that, in the field of culture and education, East-West co-operation must be directed towards

strengthening the role of the individual, facilitating universal access to the cultural assets of the other signatory states, and encouraging direct contacts between non-governmental organisations and between individuals ;

**With regard to the follow-up to the conference**

42. Considers that the momentum of the CSCE as a determining factor in East-West relations should be maintained, and that the scope which it affords should be further explored ;

43. Regards the Belgrade meetings as a stage in a long-term process enabling, in an atmosphere devoid of polemics, a preliminary review to be made of the Helsinki agreements which, in accordance with the idea of international co-operation, is based on mutual concessions and advantages ;

44. Considers that the Helsinki agreements cannot, simply on account of their signature, cause a sudden transformation in attitudes towards individual rights or relations between states, but that changes in this direction are only possible if the dialogue is continued and if the participating states develop co-operation in all fields ;

45. Considers that, independently of the Belgrade meetings, all the signatory states must follow up the several provisions of the Final Act, individually and collectively, fully using the opportunities offered by the competent international organisations ;

46. Considers it essential to inform the public as fully and as realistically as possible on the role of the CSCE and its follow-up in the framework of East-West relations :

- a. by giving the Helsinki agreements and their follow-up wide coverage in press, radio and television ;
- b. by organising specialised seminars and round tables on the Helsinki agreements, and providing participants with the necessary documentary material ;
- c. by providing the public with complete information on the scope and objectives of the Belgrade meetings ;
- d. by initiating real concertation between governmental action and parliamentary action in this field ;

47. Decides :

- a. to arrange for analysis of the implementation of the Final Act of the CSCE to remain on the agenda of the competent committees, and to hold a further debate in plenary session during the course of 1978 ;
- b. to take all suitable initiatives with a view to beginning a dialogue, in a spirit of constructive co-operation, between politicians of all the signatory states on questions relating to security and to the various areas of co-operation in Europe ;

48. Invites the Council of Europe member governments :

- a. to examine the content of this resolution as an expression of the opinion of the nineteen member states, all signatories of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference ;

b. given the vital importance of close cooperation in the application of the Helsinki agreements between parliamentary representatives and governmental authorities, to ensure that parliamentarians are adequately represented in the national delegations to the principal meetings to be held in Belgrade in the autumn of 1977.

1. *Assembly debate* on 27, 28 and 29 April 1977 (4th, 5th and 6th Sitzings) (see Doc. 3951, report of the Political Affairs Committee).

*Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 April 1977 (6th Sitting).