

PRIME MINISTER

CSCE: LONDON INFORMATION FORUM

The attached letter conveys the Foreign Secretary's recommendation that we should offer to host a CSCE Information Forum in London in April/May 1989. It would be the first CSCE event hosted here and the intention would be to take the Conference Centre for it. He envisages that you would open the meeting with a major speech.

I do not know how you would feel about this. CSCE meetings rarely come up with clear cut statements and conclusions and this one will probably be no exception. On the other hand, every such meeting is a means of putting pressure on the Soviet Union and East European countries to grant more freedom and more human rights and therefore serves a useful purpose.

On balance, I think you should agree that we should hold a meeting here, but reserve judgment on whether you would make a speech at the opening until we have a clearer idea of what we expect the meeting to achieve and see what progress is being made in other areas of the CSCE process. For instance, if the absurd idea of a human rights conference in Moscow were to be going ahead, I think you might well not want to be associated personally with a CSCE event here.

Agree?

Yes ✓

C.D.P.

(C. D. POWELL)

24 March 1988

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*file*

*JDBRIF*

*to PAB*

*P.C.*



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

28 March, 1988.

*Dear Lynn,*

CSCE: INFORMATION FORUM

Thank you for your letter of 24 March about the proposal to hold a CSCE Information Forum in London in 1989.

The Prime Minister agrees that we should offer to hold the Forum in London at the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre from 17 April to 23 May 1989. But she would not at this stage wish to commit herself to deliver the opening speech on 18 April (although we have noted the possibility in her forward diary). She would want to know more about likely developments in the CSCE process over the next twelve months, and particularly the fate of the proposal for a human rights conference in Moscow (I think I noticed a telegram the other day reporting Shevardnadze as saying that the Russians would not press this). She would also want to know more about what we hope to see achieved at such a Forum.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*C.D. Powell*

C.D. Powell

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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*lv*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
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London SW1A 2AH

24 March 1988

Dear Charles,

CSCE: London Information Forum

The latest forecast is that the Vienna CSCE Follow-Up Meeting will end in July with a reasonably substantial and balanced concluding document.

As you know, we are hoping to secure agreement to hold a CSCE Information Forum in London in 1989. We cannot be certain until Vienna ends that the other CSCE participants will endorse our proposal. But despite the potential for Soviet mischief-making over our well-known opposition to their proposed human rights conference in Moscow, the prospects seem reasonably good. Information is one major area of the Helsinki process so far not dealt with at a specialised CSCE meeting. Eastern, Western and Neutral and Non-Aligned countries all agree that information issues are ripe for discussion in the era of "glasnost". And there has been no argument with the proposal that London should be the venue. This would be the first time that Britain has offered to host any CSCE meeting. We have been under pressure from other CSCE participants for some time to put ourselves forward for one.

We have booked the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, the only London site with all the necessary facilities, for the period 17 April to 23 May 1989. These dates are immovable given the full Conference Centre diary. We expect to attract a large number of Foreign and other Ministers to the opening ceremony. This is likely to be not only a prestigious occasion but a major opportunity for world-wide coverage of the Western message on information as an essential management tool in a modern society and as a basic human right. Depending on the state of East-West relations at the time, it would also provide a timely platform for a Western view of Mr Gorbachev's "Common European House". The Foreign Secretary hopes that the Prime Minister would agree in principle to open the forum with a keynote speech on the

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morning of 18 April and, if possible and depending on the level of attendance expected, to host a lunchtime reception on the same day. Naturally this would all need to be looked at nearer the time. At this stage, provisional agreement to pencil it in is all that is proposed.

*Yours ever,*  
*L Parker*

(L Parker)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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