

# CSCE calls for urgent despatch of observers

By Robert Mauthner and Ariane Genillard in Prague

THE 35-nation Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe yesterday agreed on the urgent need for the despatch of observers to Yugoslavia to monitor a ceasefire and the return of all troops to their barracks.

Senior CSCE officials, representing all European countries, the US, the Soviet Union and Canada, in effect mandated the European Community to organise such a mission.

However, it noted that other CSCE participating states, such as Sweden, Canada and

Czechoslovakia, might want to take part in the mission, which will also have to win the agreement of "all Yugoslav authorities", including the military. This phrase is understood to mean that both the federal and Slovenian and Croatian authorities would have to give their approval.

The CSCE proposal to send observers to Yugoslavia is subject to the endorsement by member governments, who are expected to give the green light today. Only the approval of the federal Yugoslav government

remained in doubt last night. The composition and size of the team was not discussed at the Prague meeting, but is expected to be finalised at the EC foreign ministers' meeting in The Hague tomorrow.

The Soviet Union adopted a low profile at yesterday's meeting, but registered its general approval of the outcome. A senior US official said that Washington was very happy to leave the management of the observer group to the EC, since the Community was already engaged in detailed talks with

the federal Yugoslav government in Belgrade.

The agreement in principle on the despatch of observers followed the adoption by the senior officials of an urgent appeal to the warring parties in Yugoslavia to bring hostilities to a speedy end.

The CSCE's appeal and offer to send observers was hailed by delegates as a success for its new emergency crisis mechanism, but its limitations were all too evident. Two of the principal parties involved in the conflict, Slovenia and Croa-

tia, were allowed to attend the conference only as observers, although their approval for the implementation of the CSCE's recommendations is required.

Another weakness of the CSCE procedure is that unanimity is needed for all its decisions.

The fact that the CSCE has virtually handed over to the EC the task of organising the mission, is tantamount to a recognition that the Community is a more effective instrument for rapid international action.