

CSCE to try for lasting solution

PRAGUE — The newest addition to Europe's security structures has faced its first test, emerging bruised and battered but leaving members relieved that it managed to function at all, writes **Mary Hockaday**.

Early yesterday morning, the emergency session of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) held to discuss the Yugoslav crisis ended with agreement on two proposals. Delegates agreed to ask the European Community to organise "a mission to help stabilise a ceasefire" and urged all parties in Yugoslavia to fulfil the two outstanding parts of the "troika plan": a ceasefire and return to barracks, and a moratorium on the implementation of Slovene and Croatian declarations of independence.

The meeting of EC foreign ministers at The Hague was yesterday working on the practical details of the ceasefire which the CSCE said should operate at "the invitation of the Yugoslav authorities and in full co-operation with them".

The meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) also agreed to offer a "mission of good offices to facilitate the political dialogue among the parties concerned". This mission, too, would work at the invitation of the Yugoslav authorities. The CSCE team would try to contribute to a more lasting solution, perhaps offering to mediate in talks, or send legal and constitutional experts who would report to the CSO. This was the first test of CSCE emergency mechanisms agreed in Berlin last month. Wilhelm Hoeynck, the chairman of the meeting, said it was "an important step forward for the CSCE and I hope it will be helpful also for the country concerned".

It remains to be seen what use Yugoslavia makes of either proposal. Both agreements depend on a ceasefire and the response of parties other than the federal authorities at the CSCE.

There were times when both proposals seemed in jeopardy. All decisions must be taken by consensus and delegates waited a long time for responses from Belgrade and Moscow. At one stage, Yuri Derjabin, the Soviet delegate said he thought it unlikely there could be agreement on a "mission of good offices" which could create a "sensitive precedent".