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Sommario/riassunto

The Helsinki Final Act of the 1975 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) set the rules for legitimate changes in national frontiers: They must be accomplished by peaceful means and agreement. Together with the Charter of Paris for a New Europe of 1990, the Helsinki Accords paved the way for a peaceful coexistence of the West and the Eastern Bloc. The Paris conference ended the Cold War, issuing a "Joint Declaration of Twenty-two States," in which all member states of NATO and the Warsaw Pact affirmed they are no longer enemies. The Helsinki process, continuing in the form of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), resulted ultimately in the prevailing of pluralist democracy, market economy, and personal freedom. Today, it may serve as an example for how to deal with the current situation in Ukraine and crises in other regions of the former Soviet Union. John J. Maresca was a senior U.S. diplomat at the center of this long negotiating process. He was sent as the first, and only, US Ambassador to the newly-independent states after the break-up of the USSR—the American Ambassador to the "Near Abroad"—and started a negotiating process to try to end the one conflict in the region at that time. With this book, he presents his personal memoirs of how it was possible to reach the Helsinki Accords and following agreements? a story of astonishing change and evolution which is as eminently relevant today as it was 40 years ago.

"This book is written as a memoir, and contains new information and many fascinating insights about the development of the CSCE and its evolution into the OSCE. But it also contains some very astute analyses of current events, based on the history of the issues, which surround them. It is, in fact, a commentary on the current situations in these regions, based on the way these situations developed. A must-read for anyone who is interested in the recent history and the current and future state of affairs in Europe, including the Caucasus, Central Asia, and what Russians call their 'Near Abroad.'" —Hafiz Pashayev, Rector ADA University, Baku, Azerbaijan

Neben den spannenden Anekdoten sind die Memoiren besonders gehaltvoll, wenn sie Rückschlüsse auf die Feinheiten der diplomatischen Arbeit, die schwierige geopolitische Situation in Europa und den voraussetzungsvollen Wandel der Sowjetunion zu einem demokratischen und kapitalistischen Staat erlauben. Dann wird ersichtlich, wie wichtig die KSZE für ein Verständnis des heutigen Europa ist und welche Rolle die OSZE auch in aktuellen Konflikten wie dem in der Ukraine einnehmen kann.

"Maresca skilfully captures the reader's attention when he shares his deep understanding and insights into the dynamics of US foreign policy-making at the interface of domestic and international constraints—of which the CSCE negotiation process is an example. The book not only provides a very personal narrative full of lively anecdotes, but also gives an account of diplomacy and the skill of diplomatic negotiation." Stefan Gänzle, Europe-Asia Studies, 1/2017

„Das Buch bietet eine lebendige Darstellung der Entwicklungen im Kontext von KSZE und OSZE, zu denen auch Maresca einen wichtigen Beitrag geleistet hat. [...] Diese sehr persönlich gehaltenen, aber zugleich zuverlässigen Erinnerungen sind so interessant, dass man sie nach Beginn der Lektüre nicht mehr aus der Hand legt.“ - Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas. jgo.e-reviews 7 (2017), 4