

ii) Political

Canada and Germany have developed a wide-ranging and mature relationship strengthened by the presence of a large, economically active German community in Canada and the presence of Canadian troops as part of NATO forces in Germany. The withdrawal of Canadian troops and the closing of bases in Germany underlines the need to explore other avenues for developing and expanding the relationship. Canada and Germany also have close consultative and co-operative relations as members of the UN, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and the G-7, among other groups. Germany also provides Canada with a window on the operations and deliberations of the European Community.

Germany is clearly poised to play an ongoing, pivotal role in European politics and security. It remains the largest Western aid donor to Eastern Europe and has been the East's major political partner in its relations with the West since Willy Brandt launched the Ostpolitik policy in the 1970s. Germany has expressed serious interest in becoming active in international peacekeeping. Canada's experience and leadership in this field is a resource upon which the German military would like to draw. Germany is also seeking permanent membership on the UN Security Council, though its campaign is low-key.