

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be in Germany and I am equally delighted by the warm welcome and kind hospitality that have been extended to my party and myself. My only regret is that my stay in Bonn must be such a short one.

I should also like to thank my colleague, Foreign Minister Genscher, for his kind words about Canada and assure him that I fully reciprocate his sentiments. It is easy for a Canadian to feel at home in Germany, and I think the reverse must also be true to judge by the hundreds of thousands of Germans who have come to Canada and, with their energy and traditions, have made such a significant contribution to the Canadian way of life. As the fourth largest ethnic group in Canada, Germans have done much to broaden and enrich our society.

Because Germany and Canada have the good fortune of being linked by many strands of mutual interest, cultural affinity and ethnic association, it is natural and easy for us to engage in regular consultations at the senior levels of government, as was foreseen in the exchange of letters in 1973 between our respective governments. Thus, I have had the pleasure of meeting you, sir, on a number of previous occasions in other European capitals to discuss matters of common concern.

Against this background I am particularly pleased at this moment to pay my first official visit, in my capacity as Foreign Minister, to the Federal Republic of Germany, because I am convinced that our two countries, as partners in some of the most important international enterprises of our times will be co-operating more and more closely together.

First of all, we are NATO allies and partners in maintaining and developing a healthy trans-Atlantic relationship. As a North American country, Canada has closer ties with the United States than with any other country, but we are also very much alive to the interdependence of North American and European security and prosperity and to the importance of its trans-Atlantic ties for Canada's own role in the world. It is for this fundamental reason that the Canadian Government has for some time been pursuing a policy of diversification of our international relationships, not with a view to diminishing our relations with the United States but rather to complementing them with more substantial relations elsewhere. In particular, Canada has been making a concerted effort to broaden and deepen its relations with Europe. Moreover, we believe it is in the interest of Europe to have more than one active partner in North America.

It is not, of course, open to Canada to participate directly in the great historic enterprise of building a united Europe. We are, though, watching Europe's efforts with deep interest and sympathy. We wish you well and we are confident that Europe will demonstrate its ability to