

Summit statements on such problems as terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering, human rights abuse, the environment, and nuclear safety and proliferation have focused international attention and have led to specific actions.

Among the new agenda items that have emerged in recent years, the most important has been relations with the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Russian Participation

It was in 1989 that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev first wrote to summit leaders outlining his objective of integrating the Soviet Union into the international economic system. At the 1990 Houston Summit, leaders asked the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to undertake a detailed study of the Soviet economy and to recommend systemic reforms and a Western aid plan.

The next year, immediately following the London Summit, G-7 leaders met with President Gorbachev to review his reform plans. The leaders agreed that more assistance to the Soviet Union was required to help advance economic and political reform.

In 1992, President Boris Yeltsin met with G-7 leaders following the Munich Summit to consider developments in his country and a comprehensive assistance package for Russia. Prior to the 1993 Tokyo Summit, leaders announced a \$43 billion US G-7 support package, including debt rescheduling, stabilization support through the IMF, project and import loans through the World Bank, as well as funding for a privatization program.

In Naples in 1994, President Yeltsin joined summit leaders for discussions on political issues of common concern on the last day of the summit. Russia's participation in political discussions was enhanced at the Halifax Summit in 1995, while the traditional G-7 focus on financial and economic issues was maintained.

Canada welcomes the role Russia has played in addressing important global political issues. Canada and its G-7 partners support Russia's involvement in the international trade and economic system and are working to bring about Russia's integration, at a pace consistent with its own reforms.

Summit Reform

In recent years, the scale of G-7 summits has been seen to be disproportionate with the results, and many have questioned whether summits can produce concrete decisions and actions.