

General Secretary Gorbachev's speech in Vladivostok likewise expressed willingness to explore the possibilities for improved cooperation in Asia. His words are welcome and we now look for action. Above all, we hope we have detected a willingness to withdraw Soviet forces from an increasingly devastated Afghanistan. Compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act would also make an enormous contribution towards building the confidence that must underlie any and all agreements.

Mr. Minister, we must build on the confidence achieved at Stockholm. There, after almost three years of difficult negotiations, agreement was finally reached on important confidence-building measures. Our mutual security will be improved by providing more openness and predictability to military affairs in Europe. Canadians are proud to have been part of this mutual effort. We trust it will give needed impetus to other negotiations.

All eyes are now upon the nuclear and space negotiations in Geneva. General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan have raised hopes around the world. It is within their wisdom and power to go down in history as two leaders who put us back on course towards the safer and more peaceful world for which we fought together in the Second World War. Their meeting in Iceland, only two weeks away, will test the prospects for real progress in East/West relations.

Canada, for its part, will continue to work hard to develop and broaden cooperative relations between East and West. We do not expect attitudes and policies to change overnight but rather through a process of dialogue based on mutual respect and recognition of each other's legitimate interests. Canada will be playing an active role at the CSCE meeting in Vienna. I look forward to meeting you at its opening in November. I hope that there and elsewhere, we will be able to take further steps towards real dialogue and understanding.

Mr. Minister, there is new leadership in the Soviet Union. There is new leadership in Canada. Old problems remain to be solved, but we should not be prisoners of the past. We share an historic responsibility to bring our peoples closer together.

Ladies and gentlemen, would you please join me now in raising a toast to the health of the Foreign Minister and Madame Shevardnadze, to the future of Canada/Soviet relations, and to our shared hopes for a new era in East/West relations.