

A country asserts its independence and sovereignty by being active internationally. Being engaged in the world is not to surrender sovereignty but to assert it. That is true about treaties on the ozone layer, or treaties about trade, or agreements about the movement of caribou or icebreakers. Agreements with Canada are a recognition by other countries of Canada's independence. This makes a foreign policy that protects and advances Canadian interests in the North especially important for this country. Here is what Canada has done:

- In the 1960s, we played a leading role in the formation of the International Permafrost Conference and our cooperation with Northern neighbours on science and technology is increasing;
- We have participated in numerous international efforts and agreements to protect the Arctic environment and its wildlife. Just over a year ago, we successfully negotiated an agreement with the United States designed to protect and safeguard the magnificent porcupine caribou herd that migrates through the Yukon and Alaska.
- In the 1980s we supported the development of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference; Canada hosted the Inuit Youth Camp this year;
- In 1987 we opened an Honorary Consulate in Greenland, reflecting the growing relations between our Government and peoples;
- In 1987 I led a delegation of Canadians - from the federal government, the private sector and from the Territorial Governments of the North - to an historic seminar on Northern issues in Tromso, Norway where we and our Nordic neighbours discussed environmental, economic development, defence and cultural questions relating to our North. I hope we will be able to carry the Tromso process a step forward with a follow-up meeting in Canada next year.