

Mr. Chairman, some countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have also made considerable efforts toward reforming their economic and political systems.

We believe that, for the most part, the OECD's Centre for Co-operation with European Economies in Transition addresses their priorities in areas where we feel that the OECD has a "comparative advantage."

The program evaluation now under way will help us assess how effective the centre is. We will take it into account in our position on the work program and budget exercise.

Looking ahead, Canada supports ongoing co-operation between Russia and the OECD, and welcomes their request for more extensive ties with the organization. This will enable Russia to assess its interests and contributions, while benefiting from participation in discussions on a number of sectoral and macroeconomic policy issues.

We also need to engage in further and more refined senior level policy dialogues with these countries. The high-level meeting last month was not perfect, but it was an important first step toward a more effective two-way dialogue.

Mr. Chairman, we have a special responsibility to work together on the challenge of development co-operation and to speed the process of integrating all countries into the international economic system. It is important to enhance the quality and focus of our assistance.

We need to use the strengths of the OECD to ensure that all of our policies affecting developing countries are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, Canada supports work on improving the coherence between development co-operation policies and policies in the areas of trade, investment and the environment.

Fiscal constraints and additional pressures compel us to ensure that our collective resources are being put to their best uses. We turn to the OECD to provide analysis and policy advice to deal with these new realities.

Migration is posing new challenges, which call for solutions based on international co-operation and prevention, as well as cure. The Madrid conference on migration, co-sponsored by Canada, underscored the need for comprehensive development strategies to reduce emigration pressures and to contribute to the manageability of migration flows.

The OECD should continue to analyze immigration trends in a multidisciplinary manner, with particular attention to the linkages with aid, trade, and foreign direct investment.