

CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW

The year under review, from April 1, 1990 to March 31, 1991, has been marked by political events that have changed the balance of world power and have presented challenges in diplomacy and exciting opportunities for trade. The unification of Germany, the rapid changes in the Soviet Union, and the Gulf War have had a major impact on Canada's diplomatic missions. Through External Affairs and International Trade Canada, the government has sought to advance the cause of democracy and to alleviate human suffering, while promoting Canada's interests on the world stage.



Photo: Klaus Müller

Mr. Joe Clark at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)

MULTILATERAL ACTIVITIES

Canada places great importance on her role in, and support of, many multilateral associations now dealing with these world changes. As a member of the United Nations Security Council until December 1990, Canada took part in extensive UN deliberations aimed at preventing the outbreak of the war in the Middle East. In January, when Iraq could not be persuaded to withdraw peacefully from Kuwait, Canada supported the UN resolutions and committed troops to the Gulf. Canada also showed leadership at the UN on the arms embargo to South Africa, and as a member of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA).

The Paris Summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in November 1990 marked the end of the Cold War in Europe. The Charter of Paris for a New Europe proclaimed friendly relations among 34 participating states, and the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty stated that the 22 countries belonging to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact are no longer adversaries. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, who represented Canada at the meetings, pressed for a conflict prevention centre and recognition of the human dimension in world events.

At the July Summit of NATO leaders, Prime Minister Mulroney and other Alliance leaders issued the London Declaration. This document recognized

the fundamental changes which have occurred in Europe and launched a program to transform NATO in light of these changes.

The Houston Economic Summit focused on the U.S.S.R., trade and the environment. Summit leaders recognized democratic developments in Central and Eastern Europe and launched a study into the Soviet economy to make recommendations for its reform. Canadian initiatives included environmental indicators, land-based sources of coastal pollution, and ecolabelling. The Statement of Transnational Issues condemned terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations continued with the resolution of agricultural issues having high priority.

Canada supported human rights, democratic values and women's equality at Commonwealth meetings throughout the year. The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers, chaired by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, continued its work towards the end of apartheid in South Africa.

Since the Dakar Francophone Summit in May 1989, 90 projects have been implemented. They encompass agriculture, the environment, education, culture, science and technical development. A Conference of Ministers of Culture was held in Liège, Belgium, in November, to support Francophone cultural industries.