

Mr. Gorbachev, Members of the Soviet Delegation and honoured guests, may I extend a warm welcome to you on this most auspicious occasion. I am very pleased you have been able to take time to visit Canada, to see how we live and to share your ideas with Canadians. As you may know, I attach great importance to meetings of this kind. For only if we talk can we ever hope to bridge the serious gap in understanding between East and West.

Your visit, Mr. Gorbachev, underlines the great potential of the relationship between Canada and the Soviet Union.

- Our agricultural links are already extremely important to both sides. We share your desire to intensify that cooperation and we want to maintain Canada's record as a reliable supplier of high quality agricultural products.
- Trade in other products is expanding, but remains far from its full promise. Mr. Regan, our Minister of State for Trade, will visit your country in the near future to explore this aspect personally.
- Programmes of exchanges in Arctic sciences and academic cooperation are being negotiated, and we are hopeful that results will be forthcoming soon.
- Resumed political consultations offer the opportunity to address the important political dimension to our bilateral relationship.

However, no bilateral relationship can flourish without taking into full account the broader international issues which confront us. The potential of our relationship, to which your visit is testimony, can only be truly realized in an improved international climate.

A recent publication from your Institute of the U.S.A. and Canada, entitled "Canada on the Threshold of the Eighties", stated that Canada was "one of the first western countries to recognize that the old methods of resolving international problems were no longer viable"; that our leaders have stressed the necessity of building relations between nations with different social structures on the basis of "peaceful co-existence". I believe, Mr. Gorbachev, that the discussions today have confirmed the Soviet assessment of Canada's desire for an improvement in relations among states.