

the next meeting of the federal-provincial Consultative Committee on international education-related activities.

I repeat: we do not intend to withdraw from Europe. Rather, the geopolitical, economic and social changes of the past few years are prompting a redeployment of our increasingly limited resources. Choices therefore have to be made.

We have a strong desire to maintain our cultural presence in Europe. Canada's presence abroad cannot be measured simply in terms of the sum of our country's exports. It is also measured in terms of the presence of our artists, creators and thinkers, and the extent to which our cultural voice is heard in Paris, London, Rome or Brussels. Our orchestras, film-makers, writers and thinkers forge tangible and direct human links. Europe remains a vital market for them.

Therefore, I am happy to announce that we have cancelled the previous government's decision to sell the Cultural Centre in Paris. We are looking at a series of options for its future uses. We are also considering how we might consolidate and rationalize our cultural activities internationally.

A strong, diversified relationship with our European partners, and with the European Union, remains essential to the equilibrium of our foreign policy. We know from experience that our political, economic, commercial and cultural dialogue must be rich and consistent.

This is not the task of governments alone, but of business, decision-makers, researchers and opinion-formers on both sides of the Atlantic.

### Conclusion

You will agree with me when I say that the links between Canada and Europe are solid. To paraphrase Jean Monnet, it is more realistic to focus on what is necessary than to look only at what is possible.

European security remains necessary, today more than ever. The presence of our troops in the former Yugoslavia bears strong witness to the importance we place on security in Europe.

The end of the Cold War plus European integration and expansion have radically transformed the transatlantic relationship.

Security and defence continue to be essential considerations. The bases of our co-operation in these fields are solid, but the challenges are many.