

Summit Adapts NATO to New Circumstances

PMO photo



Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (right) with British Prime Minister John Major.

The NATO Summit in Brussels on January 10 and 11 marked an important step in the evolution of the North Atlantic Alliance. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and the other NATO leaders took a number of key decisions enabling NATO to better respond to the new challenges confronting the Euro-Atlantic region.

Canada clearly affirmed that NATO should expand as the community of values that NATO represents extends to the East. The enlargement of the Alliance will be

an evolutionary process. Canada supported the proposal — adopted at the Summit — for a “Partnership for Peace” that will permit former Warsaw Pact states and other European countries to forge closer political and military relationships with NATO. The Partnership program provides a framework for joint military exercises and makes it possible for other European states to cooperate with NATO in peacekeeping operations.

In discussions about the situation in

Bosnia, Canada expressed its views on the use of air strikes, emphasizing the need for prudence given the strong negative effects such strikes could have on the security of troops on the ground and on the delivery of humanitarian aid. Canada also reaffirmed the essential role that the UN and the CSCE play in conflict prevention and management. NATO should continue to respond to the requests of these two organizations in the area of peacekeeping.

The concept of “combined joint task forces” was endorsed at the Summit. Thanks to this new approach, NATO’s military structure will be more flexible and better able to support peacekeeping operations in which the Alliance might become involved. The concept will also permit the Western European Union to use NATO resources, with the Alliance’s agreement.

Canada was pleased with the Summit’s outcome, which met several Canadian objectives: the US reaffirmed its engagement in Europe; increased European responsibility for security was acknowledged in the reaffirmation of the European Security and Defence Identity; relations between the UN, the CSCE and NATO were strengthened; NATO showed its openness to new members; and NATO improved its capacity to operate in peacekeeping operations.

Despite the dissolution of the Soviet bloc, there remains a great deal of insecurity in Europe. NATO continues to play an essential, stabilizing role — which is highlighted by the fact that several countries want to join the Alliance. ■

NATO Summit Declaration

Following is the text of the declaration of the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at NATO Headquarters in Brussels on January 10-11.

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Brussels to renew our Alliance in light of the historic transformations affecting the entire continent of Europe. We welcome the new climate of cooperation that has emerged in Europe with the end of the pe-

riod of global confrontation embodied in the Cold War.

However, we must also note that other causes of instability, tension and conflict have emerged. We therefore confirm the enduring validity and indispensability of our Alliance. It is based on a strong transatlantic link, the expression of a shared destiny. It reflects a European Security and Defence Identity gradually emerging as the expression of a mature Europe. It is reaching out to establish new patterns of cooperation throughout Europe. It rests, as

also reflected in Article 2 of the Washington Treaty, upon close collaboration in all fields.

Building on our decisions in London and Rome and on our new Strategic Concept, we are undertaking initiatives designed to contribute to lasting peace, stability and well-being in the whole of Europe, which has always been our Alliance’s fundamental goal.

We have agreed:

- to adapt further the Alliance’s political and military structures to reflect both