

--- UPON RESUMING AT 9 A.M., FEBRUARY 13, 1990

THE CHAIRMAN:

Colleagues, let me welcome you back to this session this morning. We are providing a little more typical Canadian February weather. For those of you who have spent much time outside, we are demonstrating some of the variety of Canada in the slightly colder temperatures today.

I believe some of our friends in the media banking the walls will be leaving in a moment. We can then turn to the agenda.

We have four speakers this morning. I propose to have a short coffee break and then to return as soon as we can after that to closed session in this room about ten minutes after the conclusion of the final speech.

I would invite to speak the Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs for the Federal Republic of Germany, His Excellency Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

HIS EXCELLENCY HANS-DIETRICH GENSCHER,  
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY:

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, we are gathered here at a momentous and promising stage of European history.

The link between the North American democracies and Europe cannot be demonstrated more clearly than by the holding of this conference here in Ottawa, the capital of Canada. East and West are increasingly moving towards co-operation, Europe is growing together, the Berlin Wall has fallen. Hungary was the first country to take the bold decision to open the Iron Curtain.

The determination of the peoples of Europe and of the Germans to overcome divisions -- all this has proven stronger than all previously established artificial barriers. The people are demanding their inalienable right peacefully, circumspectly, and with a sense of responsibility.

At Davos, on February 1, 1987, I called upon the West to take General Secretary Gorbachev seriously, and not to allow a historic opportunity to slip by. Today we know that his policies played a decisive part in the fundamental changes in Europe.

The Germans in the East and West realize the significance for our people of General Secretary Gorbachev's remark made in Moscow, on February 11 during our visit, that the question of unity of the German nation can only be decided by the Germans themselves and that they must themselves choose in what political forums, in what