

As we each develop our northern frontier, we should make common cause on environmental issues that affect us both: the greenhouse effect, the protection of forests and oceans, and trans-boundary Arctic pollution. Canada is Russia's friend to the west across the Atlantic, to the east across the Pacific, and to the north across the Arctic.

But fundamental to all of these decisions is having a democratic structure that allows for the development of choices.

The basis of a successful democracy is pluralism, a clear delineation of powers, the existence of organized political parties representing the various views and a Parliament that truly represents the people.

In Russia right now, the political dialogue is vigorous and heated. Your challenge is to build on the hard-won reforms to ensure that both the process and the products of democracy are enhanced.

As a politician, I know the value of building consensus and realistic compromise. I also know that democracy is never an end in itself, but rather a continuation of a process to higher and higher levels of co-operation.

Canada and all the world's nations are stakeholders in Russia's future. None of us is alone, and that is why diplomacy, too, must adopt a new face as we near the 21st century.

Addressing graduating students at Johns Hopkins University last May, Prime Minister Mulroney challenged them, and us, saying: "Rarely in history has there been such a victory for an idea -- the idea of democracy. The task the world's democrats face now is to secure that victory and to ensure that it is neither hollow nor short-lived. History will judge my generation and yours by our response to this challenge."

We must capture the hopes of the new generation and turn their dreams into reality.