

Note from the Minister

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As Canada's newly appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs, I take great pleasure in introducing this edition of *Canada Reports* — a magazine devoted to Canadian foreign policy issues.

The 1990s mark an exciting period of challenge and opportunity for the international community as we enter into historic chapters of change in Europe, the Middle East and North America.

This issue of *Canada Reports* highlights Central and Eastern Europe where the walls that have long obstructed East-West relations are coming down and where the region's nations are beginning the transition towards democracy and market economies. In committing some \$2.39 billion to

technical assistance, food and humanitarian aid, loans and debt reduction, trade credits and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Canada is an important partner in this process of reform. As a result, Canada's relations with Central and Eastern Europe are burgeoning in fields as diverse as culture, science and technology, sport, trade, security and the environment.

With the approach of Europe 1992 — the creation of a European Community (EC) Single Market — the spirit of change is also sweeping the EC. The only non-European nation to have signed a commercial and economic co-operation framework agreement with the EC, Canada looks forward to Europe 1992 and an enhanced relationship with its second-largest trading partner.

In another part of the globe, the liberation of Kuwait marks a new chapter in the complex quest for peace and security in the Middle East. A trusted global peacemaker, Canada supported the United Nations' (UN) unprecedented diplomatic, economic and military actions during the Persian Gulf crisis and has contributed the largest contingent to the UN peacekeeping Iraq/Kuwait Observer Mission now active in the region.

Finally, Canada has also taken the lead in environmental diplomacy, recently unveiling its wide-ranging Green Plan to preserve the environment and signing the landmark Canada-U.S. Air Quality Agreement that will reduce acid rain and protect North American air quality.

Together these Canadian initiatives will contribute to a future of revitalized international co-operation. During this era of unprecedented change, I look forward to working with the other nations of the world in building a stronger, more open international community — a process unimaginable only a few years ago.



The Honourable
Barbara McDougall:
Canada's new Secretary
of State for External
Affairs.