
POLITICAL ISSUES

Leaders and Foreign Ministers will have an opportunity at Venice to discuss important political issues of common concern.

The current state of East-West relations will figure prominently in the discussions, especially in view of the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, and the possibility of a major arms control agreement to reduce intermediate range nuclear force missiles (INF). The prospects for incremental improvements in East-West relations, based both on renewed efforts at building confidence and on reciprocity, have brightened considerably since the Tokyo Summit. Leaders and Foreign Ministers will wish to consider the elements that would be required for the construction of a more cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union over the longer term. In this regard, the development of economic relations with the Soviet Union will be a subject of particular interest.

Canada is attaching special importance to discussions of the situation in South Africa. We believe that by working together the Summit countries can play a larger role in promoting peaceful change in South Africa. Our countries share an abhorrence for apartheid and a recognition that only a non-racial and representative democracy in South Africa would provide the basis for peace and justice in the region.

Other regional conflicts will also be a source of discussion at Venice. The continuing failure of the Soviet Union to disengage from Afghanistan in spite of declarations to the contrary, will influence the discussion on East-West relations, as will the situation in Cambodia. The deteriorating political climate in Central America could also come in for extensive discussion, as could the Middle East.

Terrorism has been an important agenda item at previous Summits. Venice will be no exception. The Summit countries will be examining ways of expanding their collective action against terrorism.