

In Kiev, the CBIE, local government and the Institute of Public Administration are establishing a Management Training Institute for government officials and a Master of Public Administration degree program. This will undoubtedly benefit both countries and illustrates that building on values can also enhance our interests.

We cannot measure the economic benefits of these new links with Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs and other East Europeans, but we know that, ultimately, they will be substantial.

It is also in our own interest to do everything that we can to consolidate democracy and help stabilize Central and Eastern Europe. A stable, peaceful Central and Eastern Europe is vital to peace and security in Europe as a whole.

Canadians are all too familiar with the consequences of instability and conflict in that part of the world. The rapid disintegration in the former Yugoslavia is an ominous reminder that democratic structures, and respect for human rights, do not come easily and cannot be taken for granted.

Even here at home, our democracy requires vigilance. And our competitive strength depends more and more on investing in our own people.

Canada is a modern, advanced, industrial nation. With only the 31st largest population in the world, we have the seventh largest economy and the second highest standard of living. Last year, the United Nations reported that, in terms of overall quality of life, we were number one among all the nations of the world.

We did not get this far by being closed and insular. We did not become a member of the Group of Seven Industrialized Nations (G-7), and a highly respected country in all the major councils of the world, by turning our backs on the world. Quite the opposite, we have become successful by being active players in the community of nations.

We are founding members of the United Nations and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and we are active in virtually all major multilateral institutions.

We negotiated the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement because, in today's global economy, it is essential to look competition squarely in the eye.

It would be fatal to an export-dependent economy like ours if we were, instead, to bury our heads in the sand. I am preaching to the converted when I underline that to maintain our ability to compete, to generate exports and high-skill jobs, we must develop our technology and knowledge base more rapidly. We can do that,