

"I must add further that the expedition itself, and its success, became possible thanks to the fact that many Canadians and Soviet people shared the idea of the crossing, that preparations were undertaken by reliable and committed sponsors, such as the newspaper Komsomol'skaya Pravda, the Sputnik International Youth Tourism Bureau, and the Canadian Conexus and McDonald's companies.

"Millions of people followed your journey and wished you success, while many participated in its organization. And so today, together with the immediate heroic participants in the crossing, we commend with awards the Soviet people who helped realize this bold project. These are the aviators, the base radio operators and the members of the expedition headquarters staff.

"I sincerely congratulate you all on your high State awards from the Soviet Union. From my heart I wish you good health and happiness. Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev, Secretary-General of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, sends you his warm congratulations.

"May the ski track left in the snow by your expedition across the Pole, keep its meaning as a path of friendly relations between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Canada."

After conferring of the awards, Mr. Ryzhkov conversed with the members of the expedition. Soviet and Canadian participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude for the high appreciation of the crossing and for the assistance rendered by the Soviet government in organizing and conducting the expedition. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers