

authorities, Libyan forces withdrew and were replaced by an inter-African peace force under the auspices of the Organization for African Unity (OAU). Morocco agreed to a referendum in the Western Sahara which should lead to a peaceful settlement for this disputed area and the OAU adopted a human rights charter for ratification by its member states. General André Kolingba seized power in the Central African republic after a coup d'état but another threatened coup in Gambia brought a rescue operation from Senegal and talk of confederation by the two states.

In Central America, which was tormented by internal conflicts and guerilla warfare that resulted in the death of thousands of innocent victims, Canada continued to push for internal political solutions without external intervention but, by year end, no peaceful solutions were in sight.

East-West relations and collective defence

With Soviet troops still in Afghanistan and uncertainty over the future of Poland, East-West relations continued to worsen: in Madrid, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) laboured on much past its lifespan with few tangible results. In particular, there was no agreement to call a conference on disarmament in Europe or to develop co-operation in the humanitarian dimension of the CSCE. In December, a fresh blow was dealt to confidence between East and West when martial law was declared in Poland.

Leaders at the Economic Summit agreed on the need for clear and strong support for Western defence efforts. Canada, with other Western nations, supported an approach recognizing the need to achieve a balance between matching Soviet military strength and working toward the goal of balanced and verifiable arms control and disarmament - the so-called two-track approach.

The management of East-West relations in the face of a continued threat of Soviet intervention in Poland and events in Poland itself featured prominently in NATO consultations during 1981. At the regular ministerial meetings of the North Atlantic Council (Rome) and in December (Brussels), the alliance's foreign ministers re-affirmed their resolve to work closely to seek peace and security through a stable balance of forces and constructive East-West relations.

Secretary of State for External Affairs MacGuigan assumed the role of honorary president of the North Atlantic Council in time for the Council's December meeting. In his opening address, he emphasized the alliance's role as the bedrock of Western security, rejected unilateral disarmament and called for a more effective NATO communications policy which would be more persuasive to those who have not properly understood the NATO deterrence strategy. On behalf of NATO colleagues, he welcomed the Spanish foreign minister at a protocol-signing ceremony which marked the first step in Spain's accession to NATO. Within NATO, Canada attempted to improve crisis management procedures. Canada was also active at the Madrid meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.