

Throughout our history we have also had Northern dreams, often dashed on this harsh environment. I hope that we have drawn some lessons from our experience. I would like to suggest a few.

The first lesson is the crucial importance of cooperation. Only seven countries have territory north of the Arctic Circle. Only five of them border on the Arctic Ocean. While the North may be important to all of them, the vast majority of the populations of all these countries lies far to the south of the Arctic Circle.

If there is to be progress in meeting the challenges of the North, there must be a sharing of information, ideas, experience and technology by the few countries concerned. Canada and Norway are especially qualified to take the lead in sharing. Indeed, this seminar is of particular importance to developing that cooperation. Canada would consider hosting a further meeting of Northern countries in 1988 or 89.

Second, we should exploit improvements in East-West relations to pursue peaceful cooperation among all Arctic nations. The Soviet Union occupies 50% of the Arctic shoreline. Although it is ahead of us in some areas of development, it has much to learn from us in other areas. We share problems such as the environment that demand cooperation.

Canada intends to expand its Arctic programs with the Soviet Union and with other Arctic countries. Together we can develop this challenging landscape, protect this fragile environment. Indeed, cooperation in the North can help build confidence, it is a bridge between our societies.

The third lesson is that we must all learn from the Inuit and the Saami, the people who have lived for many centuries in the North. And we can learn lessons that are relevant far beyond the Northern environment. Let me quote Robert Williamson, a Canadian anthropologist who has devoted his life to the study of the North.

"In the Canadian Arctic...I found peace. It was the Inuit people there, and their values. They lived interdependently ... They knew that their survival depended on harmony and cooperation. They had found ways of minimizing suspicion, channelling stress positively, and withdrawing with integrity from potential conflict".

These are lessons we all must learn. In the North and in the whole world. Thank you.