

Today we face an emerging new dynamic in East/West relations, in part brought about by changes which are taking place in the Soviet Union. Along with glasnost and perestroika has come a new political thinking in the USSR, which has had its impact in the area of arms control as well. Soviet leaders and their Warsaw Treaty partners now espouse a concept of "reasonable sufficiency" in military doctrine, which suggests a shift to a more defensive posture. There appears to be a growing appreciation that the West's military approach reflects its own perception of its legitimate defensive needs, in the face of Warsaw Pact force levels and deployments.

Eloquent testimony to this change in thinking was provided by President Gorbachev's statement to the UN General Assembly last December, in which he announced his intention to reduce Soviet force levels and to change the Soviet force posture. This was followed by the announcement of further reductions by other Eastern European countries. Mr. Shevardnadze provided further elaboration yesterday. These were welcome announcements and we look forward to their implementation.

These developments augur well for our undertaking here. Yet the challenge before us in these new security negotiations remains a daunting one. We shall surely need great reserves of political will, confidence and determination when confronted with the enormous complexity of the issues involved. Our will for a stronger peace, based on enhanced mutual security, must drive these negotiations forward.

Canada's interest and engagement in these negotiations results from the long history and rich traditions which we share with the countries of Europe. Our cultural and linguistic ties with the countries of both Eastern and Western Europe reach back over the centuries, and remain strong; commercially, we prosper as good neighbours. The very foundation of our state was linked to our participation in European affairs. In recognition of this shared heritage and of our continuing common security interests, Canadian soldiers remain in Europe today, firm in the fulfillment of our responsibilities as a member of an Alliance committed to the defence of freedom and human rights.

At the start of the new negotiations on Thursday, Canada will join in tabling detailed, concrete proposals as outlined here yesterday by Sir Geoffrey Howe. In the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, we will work to improve and expand the measures agreed upon in Stockholm, seeking greater transparency both of military organizations and of military activities. We will propose measures for an annual exchange of information concerning military organization, as well as measures designed to produce