

In 1991, while visiting Warsaw and Prague, I spoke to my counterparts who were expressing some security concerns and wanted to improve their relationship with NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]. The promotion of increased security relations and dialogue between NATO and the "new democracies" is something for which Canada can take some credit. This was first put forward in a formal way by Prime Minister Mulroney in September 1991. It is now a reality. The North Atlantic Co-operation Council has already played an important role in allaying some of the security concerns of these countries and in harmonizing a once heavy military culture with the norms of a democratic system.

The CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe] has also experienced some important changes, with its membership growing from 35 at the beginning of my tenure to 52 today. It is a somewhat unwieldy group, but its responsibilities and its activities have also expanded substantially. Many of the measures for conflict prevention and conflict resolution put forward by Canada prior to the adoption of the Paris Charter in November 1990 have now been adopted by the CSCE. When some people make the argument that the CSCE is ineffective because of its lack of success to date in the Yugoslav conflict, they should look at some of the other areas where it has had a little more success and has improved its mechanisms. CSCE human-rights missions in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus, and fact-finding or observer missions in Kosovo, Macedonia, Sandjak, Vojvodina and Nagorno-Karabakh have had a preventive effect: they have not contributed to a final solution, but these missions have curbed some of the excesses and helped to manage difficult conflicts. We have participated actively in these missions.

During the same period, Canada has been a key player in the Organization of American States (OAS), whose annual General Assembly I will be attending in 10 days. We have been deeply involved in attempts to bring democracy back to Haïti, for example, and I can testify both to the difficulties and to the progress being made, both of which seem to move together. Hemispheric security is seriously discussed in the OAS, and subjects, such as non-proliferation and the control of conventional weapons, are also on the agenda.

In the Asia-Pacific region, where we pioneered the North-Pacific Security Dialogue, the process appears to have taken hold. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), security will be on the agenda this summer for the first time.

By addressing the issue of regional security, we are at the same time addressing the security concerns that are sometimes used to justify the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are strongly pursuing the comprehensive non-proliferation strategy set out by the Prime Minister last year. First and foremost, we