

During its internal discussion of the Basic Elements Paper, NATO received indications of interest in the proposal from several member states of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO). While encouraging, these messages did not lay out a WTO position in any detail. The most comprehensive elaboration of interest in "Open Skies" by a WTO member state was put forward by Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze when he endorsed the idea of an "Open Skies" Conference during his meeting with US Secretary of State Baker in Wyoming in September 1989. With the release of NATO's Basic Elements Paper, it is hoped that representatives of the WTO states will engage in a constructive dialogue on the issues.

The Issues Discussed

In order to promote discussion of the issues surrounding "Open Skies", the Verification Research Unit of External Affairs and International Trade Canada devoted its Sixth Annual Symposium to the subject. The Symposium, held in Ottawa between November 21-24, 1989, gathered together representatives of industry, academe and several governments. Working in an informal atmosphere, the participants explored the technical, organizational, legal and political issues surrounding "Open Skies". The conclusions of the workshop were:

- in any confidence-building regime the most essential requirement for success is sufficient political will to