

Mr. Chairman, this is an historic moment because it is the first time the foreign ministers of all (or practically all) the states of Europe have assembled in company with Canada and the United States of America to work out ways of furthering their common interests in greater security and wider co-operation. This occasion reflects in a tangible way that interdependence of Europe and North America of which I have spoken and which is such an important fact of international life for Canada in particular.

We are in the course of initiating a new kind of negotiating process in which decisions are taken by consensus of all the participants, large and small, aligned and non-aligned: a process by which each shares responsibility for their implementation; where no state or states, because of size or power, can dictate the outcome.

In this new approach in which we are all engaged, we will be creating new kinds of relationships in Europe that will influence significantly the shape of developments on this continent and in our countries over the coming years. In so doing we have before us a basic question: will the principles that we will be drawing up be based on the mutual hostility and distrust of the past or on a growing degree of mutual tolerance and confidence? Co-existence may be peaceful in purely physical terms but can be warlike in psychological terms. Devotion to one's own system or ideology need not and should not imply a commitment to convert others or to force them unwillingly to follow ideas in which they do not believe. Detente implies not the removal of differences in systems and ideologies but their mutual acceptance and accommodation in the interests of greater co-operation, freer movement and more open communications among people as well as states. Competition, yes, but antagonism, no. Only in this way can the division of Europe be overcome.

There must be a broader and more dynamic concept of co-existence of people as well as states, of ideas and ways of life as well as of regimes and systems. How otherwise can they enrich one another and promote the ideals of mankind? Otherwise we will have only uneasy existence in which real detente -- lasting and rewarding for all -- will be impossible.

It is in this new and deeper spirit of live-and-let-live that we hope the second stage of the conference, which we see opening in mid-September, will embark on its important task. It is also in this spirit that Canada, for its part, will participate fully in all aspects of the conference, convinced that in doing so it will be contributing to the security and well-being both of Canada itself and of the international community.