

Ladies and Gentlemen, Señoras y Señores:

I welcome this opportunity to address the Argentine Council for International Relations. Many of you look back on lengthy and distinguished careers in government or diplomatic service. And so I look forward to an exchange of views with you concerning Canada's broadening relations with Argentina.

The Government of Canada and Canadians are becoming increasingly interested in Argentina. We are impressed with the success of your extensive political and economic reforms of the past few years. We are eager for a closer, more productive partnership and we are supportive of your efforts to strengthen your international ties.

The Group of the Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) has selected Argentina as the regional candidate for election to the Security Council of the United Nations. Canada will support Argentina in its bid for election to the Security Council.

Among the many areas of co-operation between Canada and Argentina, peacekeeping is certainly one that reflects our common commitment to world stability. Argentina has been an active contributor to UN peacekeeping missions in the Middle East, Angola, Western Sahara and El Salvador. Argentina joined the Coalition forces in the Gulf War.

Canada and Argentina are working shoulder-to-shoulder in the UN peacekeeping mission in the former Yugoslavia; some of your 900 soldiers are stationed in the same Croatia sector as Canadian troops. Last June, a delegation from our Department of National Defence visited Buenos Aires to share Canada's peacekeeping experiences with Argentina. An Argentine delegation is expected in Canada later this year.

A Canadian delegation will visit Buenos Aires from May 18 to 20 to begin negotiations on a new nuclear co-operation agreement. The agreement, and the new commercial possibilities it is expected to open, will depend on Argentina's ratification and implementation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We hope this occurs shortly, and we will also welcome Argentina's adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is rewarding for Canadians to work closely with other nations in the pursuit of a stable international environment and world peace.

Bilateral agreements between Canada and Argentina can also bring the citizens of our two countries closer together. A new air transportation agreement, which expands air links between Canada and Argentina, was concluded in 1992, and we are looking at ways to expand our co-operation to other areas, such as informatics, postal services and financial management.

Canada has adjusted its foreign policy in recent years to take greater account of our geographic location as a nation of the