

Where, in the past, we in the West felt that Soviet foreign policy sought different ends, we now believe that, under the leadership of President Gorbachev, Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and their colleagues, it recognizes, increasingly, the commonality of the interests at stake.

A pre-requisite to genuine peace is the reduction of conventional and short-range nuclear weapons in Europe and the correction of imbalances in these forces, as well as the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons on both sides to minimum levels consistent with basic security requirements. But with the political will that appears to exist on both sides, these hurdles are being overcome.

As a contribution to the confidence-building process, Canada will host an "Open Skies" Conference in Ottawa, in the new year.

The Conference will bring together senior representatives from 23 countries, of East and West, who will work out the details of an agreement on short-notice surveillance flights of each other's territories.

The key to international security lies not just in agreement on the need to avoid war, which has been the case until now, but in consensus on the advantages of peace.

The very significant reductions of expenditures on arms that confidence between East and West makes possible and the consequent relief of burdened economies on both sides are two very important advantages.

Consensus on these advantages opens the prospect of a new international order, an order where ideas and not weapons can be a nation's first line of defence, where economics is a field of open competition and where the human spirit can be freed to realize mankind's best hopes, in all their simplicity and dignity.

The old, post-war order is breaking down and a new political architecture is being created transcending Eastern and Western Europe.

We welcome stronger and more comprehensive commercial links between the European community and the countries of the East, led by the USSR.