

Today, all our peoples have grounds for new hope that the peace we now enjoy will continue - but in a more secure and less confrontational world. We are the makers of our own history. Let us harness our collective energy and direct it toward the creation of a more harmonious and stable European security framework.

The work that has gone into preparing these negotiations, both at the Vienna Follow-Up Meeting and in the Mandate Talks, has been protracted and arduous. However, the results are worthy of the effort. No arms control undertaking has ever started off on a firmer footing than the Negotiations on Confidence-and Security-Building Measures, nor has any begun with more clearly stated objectives and guidelines than the Negotiation on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

The signs are encouraging. True, a serious imbalance in conventional forces in Europe still exists. Yet, dramatic progress in arms control and disarmament has been made over the past few years, and problems which previously seemed intractable have yielded, or are in the process of yielding, to long-sought solutions.

The successful conclusion of the Stockholm Agreement in 1986, marked a major step forward toward enhanced security in Europe. The soundness of the agreement signed in Stockholm has been amply confirmed in its implementation.

Since January 1987, some 35 observations of military activities have been carried out under its terms. Canadian soldiers are among those who have been inspected and observed, and have themselves participated in observations. These observations have contributed materially to the heightened sense of confidence which now exists; they have helped entrench such important gains as the right to on-site inspection.

The pattern of observations and contacts among military personnel that has been established is unprecedented in both its nature and scope. A great opportunity exists to enhance this new climate for trust and cooperation. We must build carefully and well on this foundation.

All of our efforts, of course, have not been equally fruitful. Last month, for example, we concluded the Mutual and Balanced Forces Reduction (MBFR) talks without having reached agreement. The extent of common ground proved to be insufficient. However, even here we gained invaluable experience.