

April 1988

THE TORONTO ECONOMIC SUMMIT  
6. POLITICAL ISSUES

Summit political discussions often focus on East/West relations. For example, leaders at Versailles in 1982 and London in 1984 agreed on a general approach to East/West economic relations. The Williamsburg Summit in 1983 associated Japan with a Declaration on the indivisibility of the security of Summit countries. The 1985 Bonn Summit in its "Political Declaration on the 40th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War" was a statement of democratic values shared by Summit countries, as was the 1986 Tokyo Declaration "Looking Towards a Better Future". Summits in their discussions and declarations also have frequently addressed specific aspects of East/West relations such as arms control and Afghanistan. The Venice Summit of 1987 in its "Statement on East/West Relations" was in effect a statement of common approach to the Soviet Union under Mr. Gorbachev with respect to these issues and others such as human rights.

Over the years Summits have also dealt with terrorism. The Bonn Declaration of 1978 was a major achievement in combatting aircraft hijackings. At Venice last year leaders reaffirmed their commitment to statements on terrorism made at previous Summits, and took decisions to strengthen the Bonn Declaration.

Leaders also discuss any crises that occur around the time of the Summit. For example, the Chernobyl nuclear accident and freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf were respective issues of the last two Summits.

Summit Foreign Ministers exchange views on a broad range of political issues. In addition to East/West and North/South relations, Foreign Ministers generally discuss regional conflicts such as the Middle East, South Africa, Central America, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, and the Iran/Iraq War. They report to leaders on their discussions and help them shape the final text of any political declarations.

At Toronto leaders will, no doubt, as at past Summits, discuss East/West relations and other political subjects. East/West relations will be of particular interest in the aftermath of the Moscow Summit between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev scheduled to take place May 29 to June 2 and of the NATO Ministerial Meeting to be held in Madrid June 9-10.