



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

STATEMENT

93/63

AS DELIVERED

**AN ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE ANDRÉ OUELLET,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
TO THE
MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE
NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL**

**BRUSSELS, Belgium
December 2, 1993**

Canada

I take tremendous satisfaction in finding that one of my very first duties as Canadian foreign minister is to attend a meeting of the North Atlantic Council. I have a number of reasons for this. To begin with, let me reaffirm that Canada continues to place great importance on co-operation with its NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies for the purpose of strengthening transatlantic and European security. Secondly, in the face of the complex and multidimensional threats to our security, we feel that multilateral co-operation is the most effective, if not the ultimate, solution. Finally, NATO, an alliance in terms of its political and military dimensions, can contribute decisively toward guaranteeing our common security, both through direct action and through association with the United Nations [UN] and the CSCE [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe]. In fact, these elements and our viewpoints on a certain number of key points on this meeting's agenda will be looked at in the review of foreign and defence policy planned by the new Government of Canada in the coming months.

The threats that I mentioned will continue to exert heavy pressure on NATO. We must, therefore, see that its internal integrity is preserved, while enabling it to adapt to the new requirements. I think we must make sure that NATO remains attentive to the security concerns of its neighbours. Moreover, in view of the constraints being felt by all of us today, NATO must fulfil its mandate in the most efficient way possible, since it will be increasingly difficult to find new resources.

The key to the problem lies in careful management of resources, and I am pleased to see that progress has already been made in this direction with the budget for the NATO infrastructure. We must continue these efforts and take a critical look at NATO's civilian and military budgets. This will be essential, if the Organization is to respond to the new demands facing it.

Mr. Secretary-General, I agree with you concerning the issues that will have to be dealt with, if our January summit is to succeed. Canada feels that, in order to deal with them, NATO must, above all, reaffirm its reason for being and its commitment. Its credibility depends on it. Consequently, both during our ministerial meetings and at our January summit, we must do everything we can to strengthen the alliance. Allow me to point out that the transatlantic dimension is central; we cannot allow internal preoccupations and differences to weaken it. This dimension requires, in turn, a positive and constructive recognition, in compatibility with the alliance, of the new European identity in security and defence. Canada has long advocated this approach, and feels that we must develop new ideas, of the "separable but not separated" type, and form a joint panel to respond to the concerns and needs of our European friends, while preserving the integrity of the alliance. This we can do, if complementarity and genuine transparency exist between NATO and the Western European Union.

By reaffirming the internal integrity of the alliance at the summit, we can in the future expand our field of activity and enhance security throughout our region. But how will we go about doing this?

To begin with, we must firmly renew our support for the work of the United Nations and the CSCE, both of which are intensely involved in our region's co-operative security program. "Support" is an appropriate term here, because we seek not to compete with these organizations, but to show our willingness to help by making the expertise and strengths of NATO available to them. I adhere fully to the initiatives undertaken to enhance these ties.

Peacekeeping is a fundamental instrument in preventing conflicts and managing crises. In peacekeeping, military forces co-operate directly with civilians to promote peace and security. Thus, it is quite natural that the alliance provides military forces for this purpose. Besides making our contribution, based on an internal consensus as to the concept, doctrine and style of the operations, we must seek the participation of our geographical neighbours in this undertaking.

From this point of view, Canada subscribes to the Partnership for Peace proposal and believes that it will be a way of stressing the peacekeeping element of our work plan to the North Atlantic Co-operation Council.

As one of the initial proponents of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC), Canada strongly supports continuation of focussed co-operation with our NACC partners. In our view, this co-operation should build on NATO's own strengths. Thus, we urge that NACC concentrate on areas of co-operation such as peacekeeping, civilian-military relations, defence planning, and arms control and non-proliferation. Such a concentration will, in addition to building on our strengths, facilitate our ability to make best use of available resources.

This inevitably brings us to the issue of NATO expansion. I can be very succinct on this topic. We do not believe that we are properly prepared for expansion. But we do strongly believe that we must give a clear political message of our willingness to do so in the future. Today and tomorrow, we should set the stage for a summit statement to that end, citing a number of considerations (political, economic, military and social), which define our alliance as being central to that expansion. Decisions in the future based on those considerations will be intensely political in nature and, at this point, we should therefore avoid prejudging them.

The integrity of the alliance and stability of the region should be our guidelines. But we must positively engage this issue. Grudging treatment will make a failure of our alliance and will disappoint our friends.

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their missile-delivery systems, as well as continuing concerns in the conventional-arms fields, including preservation of the CFE [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe] Treaty, are priority issues for Canada and for the alliance. Co-ordinated and comprehensive responses to these issues by all members of the alliance will be critical, if we are to succeed in dealing with them successfully.

Although we are witnessing many tense and critical situations, the one in the former Yugoslavia is by far the most urgent of all. In co-operation with several other countries, Canada has sought to resolve this tragedy and to end the suffering.

We have pressed for respect for human life and the punishment of those who violate it. We have just released an additional sum of \$10 million to alleviate suffering this winter. We have also participated in political efforts to arrive at the only possible solution: an agreement negotiated by all parties concerned. To add to these actions and to confirm our commitment, we were happy to take part in the meeting recently held in Geneva. We have also energetically supported peacekeeping efforts and have constantly upheld the idea of NATO participation in a comprehensive peace plan under the auspices of the UN. At the same time, we oppose and will continue to oppose proposals for military action that do not favour resolution of the conflict and do endanger the lives of peacekeepers. We are deeply disappointed by the inability of the parties involved to negotiate an agreement, and the idea of another winter of suffering and cruelty causes us concern. We believe that all possible pressure must collectively be brought to bear on the parties concerned so that they will continue negotiating instead of fighting, and will finally recognize that their true interests will be better served by a negotiated peace than by prolonging an inhuman war.

Mr. Secretary-General, in conclusion I would like to salute your efforts and to assure you of Canada's determination to find answers to all of the items that you have so clearly raised in your letter. We have just over a month to do so, if we wish the next summit to be able to help transform our alliance and to make it more credible and effective. It is in this spirit of honest co-operation that I approach my work among all of us here present.