

# PRESS RELEASE



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Sixteen years ago on April 4, 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington. Canada played an important role in working out the concept of an Atlantic Alliance and full participation in this association of free nations has been a major element in Canadian foreign and defence policies.

Canada's attitude to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has been based on the fundamental belief that only through a broadly based western community that can ensure national as well as collective security and which promises to retain our historic ties with Europe and our friendly relations with the United States can Canada play a responsible independent role as a middle power in the Western Alliance.

Canada has always believed and still believes that the Atlantic Alliance must be more than a military alliance for the defence of Europe. We have therefore been amongst those who have urged over the years a much greater degree of economic and political cooperation within the Alliance. The Canadian Government is convinced that through a dynamic and forward-looking

NATO we can work towards our main goal, an Atlantic Community based on a permanent association of peoples with common

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traditions and ideals.

NATO has been successful in preserving the freedom and security of its members who have learnt that in the nuclear age only collective defence can deter war. The common defence effort has also provided the stability necessary for political negotiations and NATO members must be willing to explore continuously and seriously any avenues that may lead to satisfactory arrangements for European security and a reasonable and civilized relationship with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe.

The time has now come for members of NATO to reexamine their partnership in the light of the many new international factors and in preparation for dealing with the problems of the coming decades. Canada is particularly pleased that the Alliance has already commenced a full examination of its defence policies as well as a review of the state of the Alliance and the purposes and objectives commonly accepted by all members. Canada considers that if NATO is to remain a strong outward looking trans-Atlantic Alliance it must not give up the common experiences of the last sixteen years for new and undefined relationships but rather should draw on these experiences in evolving new methods of consultation and cooperation.