

# STATEMENT DISCOURS

SECRETARY  
OF STATE  
FOR EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS.

SECRÉTAIRE  
D'ÉTAT AUX  
AFFAIRES  
EXTÉRIEURES.



STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE  
ALLAN J. MACEachEN, DEPUTY  
PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY  
OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,  
TO MARK THE THIRTY-FIFTH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY  
ORGANIZATION.

APRIL 4, 1984

Wednesday, April 4th, marks the day, thirty-five years ago, when Canada and eleven other founding nations signed the North Atlantic Treaty, the document which created the Atlantic Alliance. This treaty enshrines the basic principle on which NATO rests; the preservation of peace and security through collective defence.

For thirty-five years the Atlantic Alliance, now with sixteen members, has made a vital contribution to stability, to the deterrence of conflict, and to attempts at fashioning a more constructive dialogue between the nations of East and West. Canada's participation in NATO -- including the commitment of Canadian Forces -- is a continuing affirmation that today, no less than in 1949, our country's security is closely linked to that of both Western Europe and the United States.

Much has changed since 1949, and NATO has demonstrated a capacity over the years to respond to new challenges. The Alliance has become a major forum, if not the key forum for its members, for the exchange of information and the harmonization of views on international issues of common concern. Canada sets great store by NATO as an essential forum for free and frank consultation among the nations of the Atlantic Community.

The value of NATO's consultative mechanisms are nowhere better illustrated than by the focus on an immense variety of questions involved with East/West relations. Members of the Alliance have long recognized that collective security is best guaranteed by the combination of an adequate defence capability and the pursuit of a general climate of confidence and mutual respect in the broad spectrum of relations between East and West.

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The Prime Minister has made it clear that we regard NATO as a cornerstone of our security policy, and that we do not wish to be -- nor are we -- silent partners. We have joined with our Allies not only in ensuring our collective security, but in seeking ways to reduce tension between East and West, to limit and hopefully reverse the arms race. The evidence is clear: we are active participants in the negotiations to reduce conventional armaments in Vienna; we seek ways to improve confidence and build security in Europe at the Stockholm Conference; and we continue to consult with our partners in other fields bearing directly on the East/West relationship.

Canadians played a fundamental role in the creation of the Atlantic Alliance, and on this anniversary it is fitting to recall the creative role played by distinguished Canadian leaders such as Louis St. Laurent and Lester B. Pearson. It was not so much fear that inspired those who made the North Atlantic Treaty, but a hope for the future based on the principles and values of the Western family of nations. The task they set for us remains a pressing one as we proceed through the turbulent decade of the 1980s. The vision which moved the founders of NATO has served us well for thirty-five years and will continue to guide Canadians in an ever-changing world.