



Christopher W. Westdal, Canada's New Ambassador to Ukraine

Last summer, Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet announced the appointment of Christopher Westdal as Canada's new Ambassador to Ukraine.

Ambassador Westdal succeeds François Mathys, and is expected to assume his post towards the end of this year, or early next year. Until that time Roman Lishchynski will head the Embassy as Chargé d'Affaires.

Westdal (B.A./Political Science, St. John's College, Winnipeg, 1968; M.B.A./ Public Policy/, University of Manitoba, 1970) joined the Department of External Affairs in 1973 after serving in Dar-es-Salaam with a University of Toronto Economic Advisory Team. He served abroad in New Delhi and, from 1982 to 1985, was High Commissioner to Bangladesh and Ambassador to Burma. From 1991 to 1993, Westdal was Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa.

In Ottawa, Westdal held the position of Regional Director, East Africa, with the Canadian International Development Agency and later was seconded to the Foreign Policy and Defence Secretariat of the Privy Council Office.

From 1987 to 1991, he was Director General, International Organizations Bureau, Department of External Affairs, and in 1994, was named Ambassador for Disarmament.

Following is the Ambassador's address to the banquet of the 18th Ukrainian Canadian Congress in Winnipeg, October 7, 1995.

(See UCC story on page 8.)

A TOAST TO UKRAINE

Canada's New Ambassador Addresses
the 18th Annual Convention of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress,
Winnipeg, October 7, 1995

It is indeed a privilege and a pleasure for me to be assuming responsibility as your envoy to Ukraine, to be studying the Ukrainian language, to be here with you at this Congress and to be asked this evening to propose a toast to Ukraine.

I bring you greetings from Ottawa and particularly warm regards from Foreign Minister André Ouellet and Parliamentary Secretary Jessie Flis, who both, as you know, take a keen interest in our relations with Ukraine and in the work and the views of this Congress. By their active participation - and in their instructions to me - they have left me in no doubt about the high priority the government accords to Ukraine.

My goal in Kyiv will be to serve Canadian interests by sustaining and monitoring the already strong and close relations between our two countries, recognizing on the one hand, Ukraine's unique geopolitical situation, on the edge,

as well as its manifestly great economic potential and, on the other, Canada's unique capacity to help, bilaterally and multilaterally, given, prominently, the talents and active commitment of Canadians of Ukrainian origin.

I bring enthusiasm and determination to this assignment, along with some relevant experience (in international security, and control, nuclear affairs, UN multilateralism, South African political transformation and in the administration of technical cooperation)... and I bring some knowledge...

In the weeks since I was appointed, I have been studying, in addition to the Ukrainian language, the hard history of your ancestors in Ukraine - and in Canada.

But I am still a newcomer. I am here - and will next week be in Alberta and Saskatchewan - much more to listen than to speak, much more to learn than to instruct... so I will be brief.

Mine is a three-part toast... to a secure Ukraine, to a prosperous Ukraine and to a Ukraine with a very good friend in the world.

To a Ukraine with secure space, at such long last, with room and freedom at last to grow and prosper, with peaceful, mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbours, and with a particular, strong relationship with NATO and achieve participation in the Partnership for Peace, in the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), the Council of Europe, the UN First Committee and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. In all these multilateral security settings, Canada and Ukraine are ideally suited for cooperation - just as we were, I might add, at the Conference this spring in New York to extend the Nuclear non-proliferation Treaty where, as Ambassador for Disarmament, I worked closely with the



Ambassador-designate Christopher Westdal addresses UCC Convention in Winnipeg.