

countries, particularly the smaller ones, the non-governmental organizations are the main Canadian source of assistance. We accord particular importance to the work of the non-governmental organizations, not only because they are noted for their flexible, fast, low-cost, grass-roots development work, but because of their invaluable educational work in promoting support for the development process in Canadian communities.

In order to mobilize and sustain public support and to highlight the need for additional human and financial resources to the least-developed countries, I believe that there would be real merit in an initiative which brings together non-governmental organizations and the private sector in developed countries with their counterparts from the least-developed countries. A planning session, which could perhaps be organized by the International Council of Voluntary Associations or some other appropriate body, would have as its purpose the identification of those areas which might be suitable for action by the non-governmental sector in least-developed countries. Such an initiative would not only provide a practical means of encouraging greater access to NGO resources but would also foster a process of continuing collaboration between governments and non-governmental organizations in developed and developing countries. In this way, it could contribute meaningfully to the follow-up measures we are considering at this conference. If there were interest on the part of the non-governmental community in such an idea, the Canadian government would be prepared to contribute up to \$100,000 towards the organization of the meeting and the travel costs of a non-governmental organization representative from the least-developed countries.

The least-developed countries are susceptible to natural disasters which in certain areas have been complicated by the plight of refugees and victims of war and sectarian strife. Clearly, greater efforts on the part of the international community are required to cope with these situations. In recognition of this imperative, Canada has doubled the official global allocations to humanitarian and refugee relief. In addition, earlier this year my colleague, the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced at the International Conference on African Refugees, a special contribution of \$23 million during the current year which will help in part to alleviate the plight of refugees in Africa's least-developed countries.