

Looking just at the major programmes in the sphere of education - adult education, literacy programmes, democratization and improvement in basic education, equalization of access for girls and women, education of the handicapped, and so on - Canada has participated actively in defining these programmes, and supports them with enthusiasm. I would like to mention in passing that Canada is a candidate to the governing councils of the International Bureau of Education, the World Heritage Committee, and the International Hydrological Programme.

Canada also believes that reform means compressing and at the same time strengthening UNESCO's programmes, not only to match its reduced financial circumstances but also to ensure its future vitality. We understand that expenditure cuts may at first be seen to conflict with the aspirations of some countries. However, the entire Executive Board has shown its desire to deal maturely with this conflict by adopting a compromise solution and putting it forward in good faith. They believe that UNESCO needs to work better and that it can be improved. Canada has an important stake in its proper functioning and so we shared in the consensus.

Mr. President, as one speaker here has said: "this consensus was built on sacrifices on every side... We will not go back... on our concessions because it is a matter of integrity." Canada is of the same mind. Let me, on behalf of Canada, say this: we will take pains to see that the compromise, adopted by consensus by the Executive Board in Paris and expanded as necessary in Sofia, is protected in our debates here. The compromise is not perfect. But one could not reasonably hope for more at a time when the process of reform is scarcely under way.

Canada has worked hard to help bring UNESCO this far, to show that the test case can be won. If we fail to maintain, indeed accelerate, the existing momentum for reform, the loss will not be confined to UNESCO. The United Nations family as a whole will suffer. If we succeed, it augurs well for the future of the multilateral system as a whole -- and for continued international cooperation in all of UNESCO's areas of expertise. The next few weeks will be exciting. I wish us all good luck!