

UN mechanisms to settle disputes and differences through peaceful means so that governments can have real confidence in the UN:

Without such a system governments will feel it necessary to arm themselves beyond their means for their own security, thereby increasing the general insecurity Without such a system there will be no reliable defence or shelter for the small and the weak. And without such a system all our efforts on the economic and social side, which also need . . . collective impetus, may well falter.

The Secretary-General suggested more systematic, less last-minute use of the Security Council, along with adequate working relations among the permanent members of the Council: "Whatever their relations may be outside the United Nations, within the Council the permanent members, which have special rights and responsibilities under the Charter, share a sacred trust that should not go by default owing to their bilateral difficulties." He urged more realism in resolutions, along with more governmental attention to them. He advised members that he intended to play a more forthright role in bringing potentially dangerous situations to the attention of the Council under Article 99 of the Charter, and that he intended to do so in a more systematic way. He suggested an increasing fact-finding capability for his office, along with swift procedures for the Council to send good offices missions, military or civilian observers to areas of potential conflict. He recommended an urgent review of peace-keeping operations, reminding members that the main strength of such operations "is the will of the international community which they symbolize. Their weakness comes to light when the political assumptions on which they are based are ignored or overridden."

On the subject of economic development Perez de Cuellar, in his 1983 report, discussed the considerable accomplishments of the UN system in assisting developing countries. He pointed out however that much more needs to be done to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of that system, and to avoid duplication of effort by the specialized agencies and bodies within the system.

Canadian attitude

The reaction of the Canadian government to the Secretary-General's analysis and recommendations has been positive. In his speech to the Assembly in 1983 the then-Minister of External Affairs, Allan MacEachen, lauded Perez de Cuellar's attempts to make the UN a more effective organization. Such support is consistent with the functional approach taken by Canada at the UN. Canada announced its willingness to help strengthen the fact-finding capability of the Secretary-General by offering to share, on a regular and systematic basis, information with his office. Canada supported his idea of making greater use of his authority to bring current or potential crisis situations to the attention of the Council, and suggested regular informal meetings of the Council to avert potential crises by examining incipient disputes during *in camera* sessions with the Secretary-General.