

Nevertheless, we believe it is unwise to press resolutions to a vote on issues which deeply divide the membership. Canada regrets for example that the campaign against racial discrimination, on which there is wide consensus, should be associated with Zionism, about which there is profound disagreement. If this link is maintained, my government will not participate in the conference to be held in 1978 on racial discrimination.

The structure of our organisation and the priorities which it follows from time to time must reflect change in the world situation and in the membership. The shift over the years towards economic and social priorities is therefore desirable and understandable. We hope that some restructuring of the economic and social sector of the UN will take place as a result. We see merit in proposals to give a more central role to the Economic and Social Council and for arrangements in the Secretariat designed to support this role. It is not too soon to envisage the Economic and Social Council in permanent session, taking up groups of issues in some orderly fashion and giving close attention to the implementation of decisions taken at UN special conferences. The recommendations of the Habitat conference, for example, of which Canada had the honour to act as host, require thorough and expert scrutiny.

We recognise as well that many members believe the Charter reflects better the world of 1945 than the world of today. We agree that useful changes might be made. But here, as in other matters, the best may be the enemy of the good. Canada takes the view that the present balance of power between the General Assembly and the Security Council, which is the central issue of the Charter reform, is preferable to any alternative. The question of the Council's membership may be debatable, but its powers and structure still serve us well. So too does the principle of equal rights in the General Assembly. If the UN is to evolve gradually into a body capable of making decisions which affect the vital interests of all states, it must follow procedures which give confidence to its members that these interests are secure.

Human Rights

The coming into force this year of the Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights is a major step forward for the UN. As