

His inclusion in this pantheon of hemispheric heroes reminds us of our shared heritage. It reminds us that our world is still a new world. A new world which shares many of the problems of the old, but retains the same spirit of adventure and hope for our peoples which motivated our forbears.

Canada will approach its membership in this organization with the same spirit of hope and adventure.

We do so with energy and enthusiasm, conscious of the legacy of history, the extraordinary challenges we all face today, and the existing promise of what we can do together.

As we take on this new responsibility, Canada counts upon your great wisdom and your long experience. We do not have unrealistic hopes, but we have hopes nonetheless and expectations, of ourselves and of our partners.

Mr. President, Jorge Luis Borges once wrote:

"A man gradually identifies himself with the form of his fate; a man is, in the long run, his own circumstances."

So it is with our region and with this organization. Our fate is our own and future circumstances are of our own making. We can stand back and allow the moment to pass us by and in so doing to force us to bear the consequences of inaction. Or we can stand together, put aside our differences and face as nations of creativity and maturity the great challenges which lie before us.

I am thankful - and proud - today of your acceptance of Canada as a member nation of the OAS. On behalf of the Government of Canada, I dedicate our country to the pursuit of your noble aims and the realization of our common dreams.