

Mr. President, the fact is that the end of 1985 is a make or break period. Either the current crisis will be defused and the way cleared for substantial reform on which to build further -- or the crisis will deepen. The compromise resolution which the Board has asked conference delegates to ratify is a considerable achievement. This conference must now take the decision as to whether it represents a sufficient start towards genuine reform, pointing the way to further improvements during the next two years.

Many countries, East and West, North and South, take the view that major programme 13 on human rights, and to a lesser degree, major programme 3 on communications, are key indicators of success. Need I say that the large majority of UNESCO activities are very worthwhile -- although some are not administered as efficiently as we would like. They essentially carry on without controversy. The politicized issues relate to only a few programmes but these assume an importance disproportionate to their cost. The structure and content of parts of programmes 3 and 13 have thus been the object of great attention, by member states and by the media.

For our part, we are encouraged that the divisiveness of the debate over a New World Information and Communication Order has been relaxed by the practical cooperation which characterizes the work of the International Programme for the Development of Communication, in meeting the real needs of developing countries.

The essential outlines of the human rights, peace and disarmament programme are still somewhat unfocussed, I admit. Agreement by the Board on its main principles was difficult. Harder still was the task of setting priorities for actions to give effect to these principles. More work is required in this area before we can be certain that it will be a process that evolves so as to match Canadian interests and correspond strictly to UNESCO's mandate. For example, Canada agrees -- although with some reservations -- that programme 13 might include a seminar to examine the contentious issue of the link between human rights and the rights of peoples. This is a necessary step towards the proper understanding of human rights in its individual and collective dimensions. The proposed meeting should take into account the work done and the difficulties encountered on this issue by other UN bodies.

In further support of what I said earlier concerning the usefulness of UNESCO's activities, I want to underline the importance Canada attaches to the organization's endeavours in the fields of science, of status of women, and of education.