

Mr. President,

I would like to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the General Assembly. I assure you of the full co-operation of the Canadian delegation in the discharge of your duties. You can count on our support in your efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Assembly, a concern which you emphasized last week in your opening address.

I would also like to welcome St. Christopher and Nevis as the 158th member of the United Nations. St Kitts is a hemisphere neighbour, a Commonwealth partner and a close friend to many Canadian visitors.

Mr. President,

We meet at a time of heightened tension. The urgency of many world problems has intensified since last year. The need for a dynamic United Nations has never been greater.

One year ago, the Secretary-General inspired us to take a hard look at this Organization. We measured expectations against realities and, to no one's surprise, found ourselves wanting. We recognized that we were in the midst of what the Secretary-General called "a crisis in the multilateral approach in international affairs". We unanimously agreed on "the imperative need to strengthen the role and effectiveness of the United Nations." We have not yet succeeded.

It is now time to move from high-sounding generalities, on which we can all agree, to specific measures for strengthening the multilateral system.

PEACE AND SECURITY

The reputation of the United Nations is widely measured by its contribution to peace and security. We must turn around the current perception that the UN cannot respond forcefully to crisis and conflict. We must make more creative use of the existing provisions and mechanisms of the Charter.

The key is the Security Council and the way in which the Secretary-General works with the Council and the members work with each other. Council members have been seeking ways to make the work of the Council more effective. It will be unfortunate if political realities prevent any significant improvements. We count upon the members of the Council, particularly its Permanent Members, to exercise their responsibilities on behalf of all member states.