

Ladies and gentlemen:

History has turned its attention today to Haiti, on which it will write one of its finest pages. A page that I hope will never be erased.

Canada is delighted to welcome the return of Haiti's legitimate government. This democratic victory marks the beginning of a new era for the Haitian people, whose rights, freedoms and dignity have been abused for too long.

Despite the repressions, chaos and horrors, Haitians have never lost hope that democracy and the rule of law would be restored in this country. They drew their courage from their hopes and belief in the future.

Their hopes were not in vain. A chapter in history has just closed on three years we would rather forget because the democratic process was not respected.

The time has come to rebuild and look toward the future. Canada, which has always supported Haitians in their quest for democracy, plans to participate, as far as it is able, in this short- and long-term rebuilding process.

Today, the Prime Minister of Canada reaffirmed Canada's commitment to support President Aristide in the difficult process of re-establishing peace, order and good government in Haiti. He also announced the lifting of sanctions, which I am sure should stimulate the recovery of the Haitian economy.

I am pleased to announce that Canada will resume its assistance program for Haiti's legitimate government. We will commit, over the next six months, \$30 million in humanitarian assistance, food aid and development co-operation.

I want to pay special tribute to the United States for their leadership in restoring democracy to Haiti. Without their uncompromising determination, President Aristide would not be back in his country. President Clinton and Secretary of State Christopher deserve our thanks for their courage and dedication to the cause of democracy and justice. It is obvious that this was not an act of self-interest, where there were vital economic interests to be preserved. Let me say that I see here today several members of Congress who rejoice with us. But we know there were doubts in Congress, and in the minds of the American public, as to the wisdom of President Clinton's decision to send troops to Haiti. Today, that foreign policy decision is recognized as the right one and does great honour to the United States.

And, now, Mr. President, allow me to say a few words in Creole:

Sé yon lot tan kap commensé pou Haiti. Nap travay ensemb pou la