

The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan; the settlements in Angola and Namibia; the ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war; and the progress evident in Central America; all are testimony to a new willingness to compromise. They are also testimony to the crucial role played by this organization and its Secretary-General in the search for global order.

Much more needs to be done. There is a difference between the absence of war and the presence of peace. The international community must continue to do everything in its power to ensure that the processes now underway in these troubled regions move from truce to settlement, from stand-off to stand-down.

We believe it is particularly important to maintain the pressure against apartheid. There are real reasons for encouragement. President de Klerk has promised reform and has demonstrated both flexibility and imagination. The African National Congress has shown courage and foresight in preparing itself to participate in genuine negotiations. Popular demonstrations in South Africa, and their tolerance by the authorities, reflect a popular will that reaches across colour. International attention, and the use and threat of sanctions, have contributed to this climate of change, and they must not be relaxed until real reform occurs.

In many regions of the world, children starve and adults perish as old conflicts born of hatred and greed continue to fester, cheating future generations and defiling the honour of ancient civilizations.

In Lebanon, blood continues to be spilt in a tragic struggle for domination in this once noble land which is now being destroyed by those who would be its ruler. We renew the call for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon and reiterate our strong support for the efforts of the Tripartite Committee of the Arab League.

In the Middle East, there is an urgent need for confidence and dialogue. We support Israel's proposals for direct elections in the occupied territories. We welcome the moderation evident in the positions of the PLO. But much more confidence-building is needed on both sides if these initial gestures are to be translated into a meaningful peace process for this troubled and war-ravaged region. Canada welcomes President Mubarak's imaginative ten-point plan as one avenue out of the current impasse.