

Mr Chairman:

I am very pleased to be with you for this 28th annual meeting of the Canadian Commission for Unesco. Personal obligations prevented me from attending last year, but I was determined to meet with you this evening to take stock of the situation after the crisis period we have just gone through and to report on the Sofia General Conference.

Without being patronizing - or perhaps I should say matronizing - I would sincerely like to thank all of you for your interest in Unesco. This afternoon I had an opportunity to look at the general report of your Secretary-General, Mrs Thomson. You are doing a remarkable job, and you are doing it in a remarkable way. In its founding statutes, Unesco was endowed with an incomparable work instrument in the form of national commissions. Many international organizations would do well to take inspiration from this model.

In my address this evening I should like to move from the general to the particular. First I shall consider the underlying reasons for a meeting like this. Secondly, I shall of course discuss the conference in Sofia, the objectives that we set and the results. Finally, being a practical woman, I shall detail the enhanced relationship between the Canadian International Development Agency, the Canadian Commission for Unesco and Unesco itself.

I THE UNESCO IDEAL

My attention was caught by a section on the Unesco Ideal in one of the documents distributed to you. It says that war is born in the minds of men, so in the minds of men the bulwarks of peace must be erected. I am firmly convinced of this. By definition, violence and war are always a rejection of dialogue. We are here tonight precisely because we believe in an organization whose main purpose is to bring men together to exchange their ideas,