

that the cause is noble, we are tempted to condone the terror. But are we wise to do so? The act we condone today may be the one we regret tomorrow, when it is turned against us. For terrorism in the end affects everyone; it is an attack on civilization at large. Violence breeds violence, murder answers murder, and order dissolves in chaos.

Therefore, Mr. Secretary-General, we approve your initiative in seeking to have the subject placed upon the agenda. A number of delegations have reservations about the debate upon which the Assembly is to enter. Some fear it will be too diffuse to be useful; others that it will be too narrow to be constructive. It need be neither. The Canadian delegation looks upon it as a way to focus international concern upon the whole range of acts of terror, and to stimulate action both by international bodies, such as ICAO and the International Red Cross, and by governments acting within their own powers or under bilateral agreements. The means of dealing with the problem will be as varied as its forms. Some international legal instruments already exist for the purpose. These should be quickly strengthened through ratification by as many states as possible. Perhaps new international machinery and new international legal instruments will be necessary as well. Then let us create them. How can the world, which has declared slavery, piracy and the drug traffic beyond the pale of civilized life, fail to outlaw terrorism? The Canadian Government, which has already amended its domestic law, entered into bilateral negotiations to limit terrorism in the form of hijacking and ratified the international conventions concerned, stands ready to contribute to the strengthening of international law to outlaw terror.

The task is formidable. But the United Nations has responded to challenges of equal difficulty in the past. Since we cannot expect national loyalties to disappear, we must work to temper these loyalties by a growing sense of responsibility on the part of individuals and governments to the international community at large. I suggest that a consciousness of this responsibility is growing in ways unknown to previous generations.

Consider the field of human rights. It would be easy to multiply examples throughout the world of violations of human rights. The task of creating and ensuring respect for accepted international standards has been daunting. Deep historical and cultural differences have produced widely differing views of the true source and proper extent of individual rights. These differences are profound. How can we legislate them out of existence? Yet in the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, the international community has legislated successfully. In doing so, it has recognized that there are limits to the exercise of state sovereignty, and that certain rights attach to individuals -- among others, rights to life and freedom, to liberty and personal security, to fair, prompt justice, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the right to leave any country, including one's own. The task now is to ensure that these rights are honoured in practice. So far as my own country is concerned, I am glad to say that the constitutional difficulties which have delayed Canadian ratification of the Human Rights Covenants are well on the way to being overcome. Through national experience and international example, Canadians have come to appreciate that the field of human rights is another sphere in which national and international obligations reinforce each other.