

At the Paris Club, extended grace and repayment periods have been offered to eight African debt distressed countries which have sought rescheduling and which have undertaken structural adjustment programs. Based on a Canadian initiative endorsed at the recent Economic Summit in Toronto, the Club is now working out the details of a new framework that will allow creditors to offer concessional interest rates, partial forgiveness or other comparable concessions when officially supplied or guaranteed commercial credits are rescheduled.

These measures represent solid progress. But I am aware that they may not yet be enough. The Secretary General's Advisory Group on Resource Flows estimated that 5 billion dollars in addition to existing resource flows was required annually to bring Africa back from the brink of economic collapse. African ministers have said that this figure is still an underestimation of the real need. What is clear is that the needs of Africa are great and, the consequences of failure to implement the Program of Action to the full by both African governments and the international community will be severe.

For our part, Canada has taken our responsibilities under the Program of Action seriously. In May 1986, Canada launched Africa 2000, a 15-year multifaceted program to work towards African recovery by the year 2000. Then, in 1986-87, Canada disbursed almost one billion Canadian dollars in Africa through bilateral and multilateral channels. Forty five percent of our bilateral assistance program over the next five years is committed to Africa. All our aid is in the form of grants and now up to 50 percent of our bilateral aid will be untied in order to allow greater local and regional sourcing in Sub-Saharan Africa and least developed countries.

We have committed a total of 2.3 billion Canadian dollars to recent Africa focused multilateral initiatives, including the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, the International Development Association and the African Development Fund replenishments and to the World Bank's special programs for Africa. Canada earlier forgave the ODA debt of all least developed countries and in 1987, we undertook to forgive all remaining ODA debt owed to Canada by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. We believe such ODA debt forgiveness is a necessary measure to provide relief for the debt distressed countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Last March, I tabled a new Canadian aid strategy in the Canadian House of Commons called Sharing our Future. In this strategy, we have put the war against poverty as the first