

The consistency of Canadian support for peacekeeping over time is also remarkable. Canadians have long believed our interests to be served by the rule of the law and by international agreements which promote collective security. We have long recognized that the most complex problems facing the world are best solved through multilateral co-operation. The causes of these problems are too diverse and the solutions too multifaceted to permit any one nation, or group of nations, to succeed in solving them unilaterally. Peacekeeping is obviously one tool in this process.

This is why Canada has been a pioneer of peacekeeping. We believe that our involvement in peacekeeping operations over four decades is a concrete reflection of our basic security and foreign policy interests. Indeed, I represent a Party with a long tradition in this area. Since 1945, successive Liberal Governments have been firm supporters of the United Nations, and of peacekeeping. It was a Liberal Foreign Minister, and later Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, who provided the idea and the drive behind the launch of the first emergency force in the Suez in 1956, earning him a Nobel Peace Prize for his introduction of UN peacekeeping. Canada has subsequently provided over 100 000 military personnel for these purposes.

This government came to power last fall on a pledge to consult Canadians more broadly on foreign policy decisions. It is indicative of the central importance of the United Nations to international relations today, and to Canadian foreign policy, that two of the three debates held on foreign policy issues by parliament since the election have focused on Canada's peacekeeping role, specifically in the former Yugoslavia.

These debates have revealed strong support within Parliament, and throughout the country as a whole, for UN efforts to provide humanitarian relief to the victims of war and for the UN's efforts to facilitate negotiations among warring parties. Canadians do not shrink from strong measures in support of these goals. However, in Ottawa, in other world capitals, and in UN Headquarters in New York, there is an emerging consensus that any UN action must be more clearly thought out and broadly supported. It must be effectively conducted and respectful of the contributions of Member States.

I know that Canadians retain goodwill towards the United Nations and a pride in the role that Canada plays there. But I also know that Canadians expect scarce resources to be used as effectively as possible to ensure peacekeeping efforts have some real hope of success. By success I mean helping to find a political solution which addresses the root cause of the conflict.

While the end of the Cold War has yielded rich opportunities to the international community, it has also thrust on the United Nations the challenge of resolving several bitter regional