

and foremost objective of Canadian aid. Our purpose is to help the poorest countries and people of the world. Africa holds a special place within our strategy. We are committed to finding ways to support Africa both bilaterally and through the multilateral system. We will work to maintain the focus of international attention on Africa.

This is the first opportunity we have had to engage in a comprehensive survey of efforts to date to implement the Program of Action for Africa. It is an opportunity, I believe, to reset our bearings for the future and to identify those areas where we must pay greater attention and more diligently fulfil the promises we have made. Measures are in place, but implementation and disbursements are slow. The efforts of African governments to undertake economic reform need to be maintained and supported.

New financial resources need to be identified and further debt relief measures pursued. We need to address, as best we can, the problems of external trade and low commodity prices. Particular attention needs to be given to the evolving questions of the impact on vulnerable groups of structural adjustment. And, longer term developmental issues must not be neglected if a sustainable recovery is to be achieved - the serious deterioration in environmental conditions, an enhanced role for women in the development process, population growth and the spread and impact of AIDS.

Development is not easy to orchestrate. I am not sure that anyone here can claim to hold the single key that will unlock the potential of Africa. But through the process of multilateral discussion and bilateral dialogue we can develop the greater understanding we need to create a better world for all. The United Nations has contributed successfully to resolving long-standing regional conflicts. Now, the African Recovery Program offers a unique opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the United Nations in finding solutions to difficult, but in the long run, equally important economic, social and development challenges.

Ours is an interdependent world. The economic health of Africa concerns the developed world as the conditions in the external economic environment concern Africa. At the Toronto Economic Summit last June, significant progress was achieved in discussions on Africa and the problems of the poorest debt distressed countries. Canada will continue to do its share to keep Africa high on the agenda of the Economic Summits, of the World Bank, of the IMF and of the United Nations itself.