

the world today: significant changes, deep-rooted and complex in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe; some possible movement in the stalemate in the Middle East; recognition of new challenges to our planet, such as threats to the natural environment, the fragile social and economic fabric of many developing countries, and the potentially destabilizing effects of unprecedented movements of people outside their countries of origin.

Fortunately, the international climate for these changes appears to have improved but the challenges themselves remain no less daunting. I believe that our generation has a unique opportunity to improve the structures and instruments at our disposal for achieving order and justice in the world. And central to that new order is the United Nations.

In the past year, the UN has demonstrated a renewed ability to serve the people of the world through collective action against the aggressor nation in the Gulf War and through its other social, economic and humanitarian initiatives. Just this past week, Canada has called upon the Security Council to take action in the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia.

Tomorrow, in my speech to the General Assembly, I will be focusing on a number of key areas, including:

- o an overall strengthening of the United Nations to ensure the rule of law in international relations;
- o the development of a collective political will to achieve genuine and lasting arms reductions;
- o the development of linkages between the process of democratization and the free-market system in individual countries;
- o the liberalization of world trade and the full integration of developing countries into the international economy;
- o the recognition and strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations to protect the environment; and finally and fundamentally,
- o the need to promote and enhance human rights, especially in such areas as gender equality.

This is a long and difficult agenda, but it demonstrates the importance and the relevance that we, in Canada, are attributing to the United Nations and its constituent agencies. It also points to the importance of the World Federation of United Nations Associations. After all, you and your 72 associations