

As the cornerstone of a rules-based international system, the UN has always been a vital forum through which we have sought to influence world affairs, to defend our security and sovereignty within a stable global framework, to promote our trade and economic interests, and to protect and project Canadian values such as fairness, equal opportunity and respect for human rights.

The promotion of human rights and justice, the prevention and abatement of environmental degradation, the alleviation of poverty, and the promotion of development and human security on a global basis—these can be achieved only through multilateral discussion and negotiation. The sole global forum available is the UN. It is therefore no surprise that support for the UN is deeply entrenched throughout Canadian society.

The UN remains as relevant to Canada today as it was in 1945, if not more so. The 1995 Foreign Policy White Paper, *Canada and the World*, put it unambiguously:

The UN continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada's global security objectives. Canada can best move forward its global security priorities by working with other member states.

The success of the UN is fundamental, therefore, to Canada's future security.

Canada has participated in virtually every major UN peacekeeping operation. The UN remains a vital instrument through which Canadians and others are working to bolster human security by ridding the world of anti-personnel mines, halting the

traffic in military small arms or putting an end to the conscription of children as soldiers. Most recently, Canada chaired the negotiations leading to the creation of an International Criminal Court, thereby helping to end impunity for war criminals.

Canada gives particularly strong support to the ongoing process of UN reform, in order to help ensure that the organization remains responsive to the interests and concerns of its membership, and capable of dealing with threats to global security. To this end, Canada is pledged to work to strengthen the UN's capacity for preventive action, to enhance the UN's rapid reaction capability, to improve the functioning of the UN's decision-making bodies and to put the UN on a sounder financial footing.

We are the eighth-largest contributor to the UN budget, after the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Russia. Our share amounts to US\$28.6 million, or 2.754 per cent of the UN's budget for the year 1999. We always pay our annual assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition.

Canada is a member of all the UN specialized agencies. It takes part in all major UN programs and is actively engaged throughout the United Nations system. We have seven diplomatic missions accredited to the United Nations: in New York (Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations), Geneva (Permanent Mission of Canada to the Office of the United Nations at Geneva), to the Conference on Disarmament, and

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