

division of authority between the Security Council and this Assembly, and by a cycle of ineffectual resolutions. We have seen an increasing tendency to introduce extraneous polemical issues in the UN Specialized Agencies, with a diminution of their effectiveness and credibility. Official spokesmen of key UN member states have expressed skepticism regarding the Organization.

To counter attacks on the UN, from within and without, we must more closely bind our policies and our behaviour to the principles expressed in the Charter.

We must also vigorously reaffirm the singular contributions that the UN has made to the development of international law. As the Secretary-General explained at length and with eloquence in a speech delivered last month in Montreal, the United Nations plays a unique and absolutely essential role in the promotion of the rule of law. It is only the UN, with its virtually global scope, which has the capacity to play that role.

This year the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea succeeded in producing a profound achievement: a comprehensive Constitution for the oceans of the world. The Conference could not have produced such a massive Convention without the active support and participation of all nations during the long years of negotiation. We deeply regret that the Conference was not able to adopt the text of the Convention by consensus. No state can remain aloof from the regime, and we must not be swayed by any attempts to undermine it.

The UN has succeeded in making human rights violations a legitimate subject of international scrutiny, and it is significant that the Secretary-General has identified human rights promotion as a priority area. Canada will support the Secretary-General in these efforts. Effective procedures must be worked out to deal with flagrant violations of human rights.

A role of critical importance for the UN is the peaceful resolution of disputes. However maligned this organization may be in its efforts to resolve disputes, it can achieve notable successes. In Namibia, the UN has worked out a balanced settlement plan which should bring Namibia to independence peacefully, and has obtained for that plan general acceptance. The substantial progress that has been made must be attributed, in part, to the dedication and constructive approach of the Front Line States and SWAPO. We hope that remaining problems will be quickly resolved.