

the world scene, one whose influence cannot be ignored. The areas where we should concentrate are becoming increasingly obvious: the French language, education, culture, communications, computers and the rule of law. I am convinced that, together with the economic activities they support, these programs will provide the energy to galvanize La Francophonie for the next 25 years to come.

Canada believes that to bring new dynamism to La Francophonie, the time has also come for all parties concerned to seek ways of better co-ordinating their programs. Our programs all operate in the same countries, but they could support each other better than they do, especially in these times when we all must learn to make better use of our resources and affirm our political co-operation.

Since La Francophonie has set high aspirations for itself, and dreams of even higher ones, there has been much talk of its "political deficit." I will not hide my agreement with those who say we need more credibility in this regard. The structures that we have put in place since the Francophone Summits first began can still be improved upon. No doubt the study group will devote some time to this question between now and the Cotonou Summit.

We cannot sit idle, we cannot stagnate. We must do what has to be done. I think that the Chaillot Summit blazed the right trail. Now we must explore it further, with imagination, pragmatism and generosity, to put La Francophonie on a firmer political footing. I am confident that we will achieve this goal.

Mr. President, I have tried to express the strong attachment that Canada feels to La Francophonie. I also wanted to contribute to our common search for the best ways to safeguard those principles so essential to the progress of La Francophonie.

I would be remiss if in closing I failed to recognize the tireless contributions that the Republic of Mauritius has made over the past two years in chairing the Permanent Council of La Francophonie and the Ministerial Conference. Mauritius has shown us yet again that in La Francophonie, there are no small countries or large countries. There are only partners working for a common cause. Madam President of the Permanent Council of La Francophonie, Canada applauds the excellent work you have done.

Thank you.