

Conference where the Charter of the United Nations was drafted. Canada took an active role in defining the mandate and ensuring the strength of the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat, the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies. The delegation worked tirelessly to create an international body that would prevent military conflict by removing its underlying social and economic causes.

Canada immediately earned a solid reputation as an objective mediator and an effective conciliator capable of identifying common ground and purpose in the midst of diversity. In 1955 for example, Canada introduced the resolution which broke the logjam which had blocked the admission of new members.

Through its participation in peacekeeping efforts, Canada has demonstrated the important and often critical role which a "middle power" can play in maintaining international peace and security. Canada's role in developing a model for regional peacekeeping serves as one of the most

important and creative diplomatic achievements in the post-war era. While Canada's leading role in the Suez Crisis is well known, during the past four decades more than 75 000 Canadians have donned the blue beret to serve in UN peacekeeping forces in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

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As membership in the United Nations increased rapidly with the emergence of many newly independent nations, Canada encouraged additional efforts to respond to the special needs of these new members. Canada has established a solid record in development assistance and North-South co-operation. As evidence of this commitment, Canada is currently the seventh-largest contributor on a per capita basis to the United Nations and its specialized agencies and the fourth-largest in absolute terms.

### A Faithful Friend

In recent years, critics have increasingly pointed to the frailties and the shortcomings of the United Nations. In the face of financial crises and decreasing confidence in the organization, Canadians have held fast and defended the UN's positive record of contributions.

Flags of member nations line the walkway of UN headquarters in New York City.

At the 1985 national convention of the UN Association of the United States, Canadian Ambassador to the UN Stephen Lewis called for a concerted campaign to defend and strengthen the UN: "Sure it's frustrating, sure it's difficult . . . But it doesn't for a moment . . . invalidate the tremendous contribution which the United Nations makes; it doesn't for a moment render us impotent; it doesn't for a moment diminish the value of working to reinforce the strengths of the United Nations."

Canada has also promoted concrete measures to protect the UN from present and future financial storms. It has offered a range of innovative budgetary and financial proposals; it has actively participated in exercises to reform, to rationalize, and to improve the economic and social structure of the UN. Above all, Canadians are working to make the United Nations a more effective and more dynamic political, economic, and social force for the 1990s.

While Canadians are not oblivious to the problems and shortcomings of the UN, they prefer to focus on its successes: in containing hostilities through its peacekeeping forces, in assisting countries in achieving independence, in providing refugees with shelter and relief, in saving millions of children from starvation, and in building bridges of goodwill between people from every part of the world.

Stephen Lewis has described Canada as middle-power with a "lasting and visceral commitment to multilateralism which is ingrained in and endemic to the Canadian character." In the years ahead, through the United Nations and the multilateral system as a whole, Canada will continue to welcome every opportunity to promote peace, harmony and security for all members of the world community.



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