

The Secretary-General also made the important link between peace among nations and peace within nations when he pointed out that "there is an obvious connection between democratic practices -- such as the rule of law and transparency in decision making -- and the achievement of true peace and security in any new and stable political order."

There are within Nation States three fundamental weaknesses that can cause disputes that go beyond their borders. Primary among these is the absence or abuse of fundamental human rights. If people have no rights, they have no hope; if they have no hope, eventually, they will have no fear; if they have no fear, they will seek any means possible to restore their rights, even to die in the trying. It is a pattern for instability, a pattern for failure, one that has happened all too often in the past.

The UN must lead in the field of human rights. In El Salvador, Cambodia, Croatia, Bosnia, Somalia, efforts to protect human rights are of fundamental importance in attempts to bring peace to these troubled lands. Canada is currently serving in all of these places.

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights offers a unique opportunity for all members of the United Nations to work in a constructive and co-operative spirit to strengthen the foundation of universal respect for human rights.

Particularly insidious among the forms of human rights abuse is systemic discrimination whether based on gender, race or ethnic origin.

Violence against women remains one of the most serious manifestations of human rights abuse. Canada initiated and strongly supports the current work in the UN toward a universal declaration on violence against women.

In another context, to eliminate employment discrimination, we must also ensure the election and appointment of more women to senior positions in national and international decision-making bodies, including the United Nations. This has been a cornerstone of my Prime Minister's domestic appointments policy.

No group should be marginalized -- all views, all experiences are important.

To this end, Canada is proud to be at the forefront of efforts to prepare for the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People, when the international community will turn its attention as never before to the rights of the world's indigenous peoples. Our recently concluded constitutional negotiations in Canada include major advances for indigenous peoples in our own country, which will end long years of injustice and inequality.