

Other Current UN Issues and Initiatives

Finances

The UN financial situation remains precarious. This affects many programs, including essential Security Council operations. As of June 2000, member states' outstanding contributions to the UN approached \$3 billion US.

Canada is the 7th largest contributor to the UN regular budget and its assessed contribution to that budget for 2000 is \$28.6 million US (about \$41.5 million Cdn). Canada pays its UN dues on time, without conditions, and has no outstanding contributions. As of January 2000, Canada was one of 43 member states to have fully paid their 2000 regular budget assessment.

The UN regular budget scale of assessments was created in 1946, based on "capacity to pay." This is measured by member states' share of world gross national product (GNP). Only the United States is subject to the current ceiling of 25 per cent. In March 2000, when the UN 5th Finance Committee commenced deliberations, 12 scale scenarios were presented. A decision by the UN General Assembly on a new scale of assessments for the period 2001–2003 is not expected until December 2000.

Canada is prepared to participate in negotiations of a new scale of assessments and supports a review of the scale for peacekeeping activities. Its share of peacekeeping expenses is the same as for the UN regular budget (2.732 per cent). Canada supports a continued substantial peacekeeping premium for permanent members of the Security Council, to reflect their special responsibility in maintaining international peace and order.

Treaty initiative

In his millennium report, *We the Peoples*, Secretary-General Kofi Annan invites "all governments that have not done so to sign and ratify the various conventions, covenants and treaties which form the central corpus of international law."

To facilitate this initiative, the UN Secretariat has prepared a list of 25 core treaties, representing of the organization's key objectives. As of July 7, 2000, Canada has signed and ratified 18 of the 25 treaties. The remaining seven are under active consideration, in consultation with the provinces. Some require changes to domestic legislation.

Three have been signed, but not ratified:

- Convention on the Safety of the UN and Associated Personnel