

# Canadian priorities at the **Special S**

## Senator Landon Pearson presents our position

In 1999, when Prime Minister Chrétien appointed Senator Landon Pearson his Personal Representative to the UN General Assembly's 2001 Special Session on Children, the choice came as no surprise. For over 40 years Landon Pearson has been a champion of children in Canada and abroad (see profile in **Canada World View**, Issue 9, fall 2000). She has forceful views on the international community's record on safeguarding children, and strong ideas on what the Special Session should accomplish.



Senator Pearson with a young Canadian delegate at a Special Session Preparatory Committee meeting in June 2001 in New York

photo: Senator Pearson's office

### Canada's views

Since her appointment, Senator Pearson has represented the Government of Canada at domestic and international conferences dealing with children's issues. As the Prime Minister's Personal Representative, she has headed Canada's delegation and put forward our country's views at all meetings of the Special Session's Preparatory Committee in New York, Geneva and elsewhere. Along with officials from DFAIT, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and other government departments, she also played a key role in developing the position that Canada will defend in New York. At the Special Session, she will be Mr. Chrétien's main adviser.

Senator Pearson says Canada has three priorities going into the Special Session:

- Allow children and youth to participate in a meaningful way. Canada blazed the trail at the first meeting of the Session's Preparatory Committee: it was the only country to

include youth representatives on its official delegation.

- Emphasize especially vulnerable groups, such as war-affected children, exploited child labourers, sexually exploited children, trafficked children, refugees and internally displaced children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, Indigenous children, children with disabilities, and child victims of poverty, famine and disease.
- Actively involve all key players—not only states but also NGOs, UN agencies and bodies, and the private sector—in support of UNICEF's work and in developing a truly global agenda for children for the next decade and beyond.

As the outcome of the Special Session, Senator Pearson says that Canada favours a short, focussed political declaration followed by a set of clear and measurable goals. No one has forgotten, she says, the unfulfilled promises that followed the World Summit for Children in 1990:

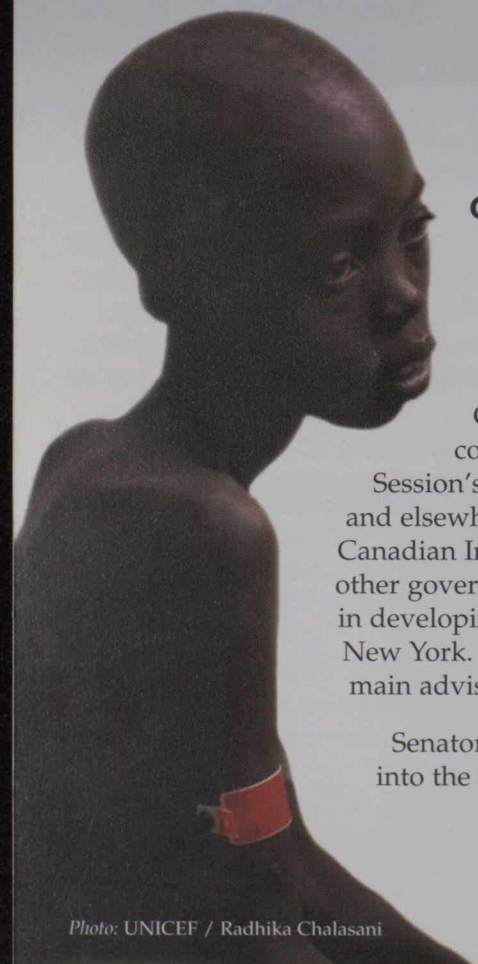


Photo: UNICEF / Radhika Chalasani

A severely malnourished child wearing an identification armband at a feeding centre in Sudan run by UNICEF and Médecins sans frontières