

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA AND WORLD PROBLEMS

Text of a speech by the Honourable Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the Twentieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 24, 1965.

Mr. President, I should like first of all to congratulate you on your election to the presidency of the Assembly. The overwhelming support which you have received testifies to the high esteem in which you are held. The Assembly is fortunate in having as its presiding officer a statesman of world stature and a political philosopher of international renown. As a member of the Government of Canada, which has many close and friendly links with Italy, it gives me great pleasure to greet her distinguished representative at this time.

I wish also to welcome to our company the delegations of the Gambia, the Maldives Islands and Singapore. It is essential to the welfare and future of this organization that it should represent the peoples of the world wherever they have attained sovereign independence. The addition of these three new members marked a further step in the achievement of its goal.

I listened with great interest to the address of Mr. Gromyko, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union. Mr. Gromyko is one of a very limited number -- and I happen to be among them -- who attended the first meeting of the United Nations in Church House in London in 1946. Indeed, Mr. Gromyko was one of those who likewise participated in the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations in London in 1945, and he has been a persistent attendee at our deliberations since that time.

I noted with great satisfaction that, as the spokesman for his country, he said that the Soviet Union will do all within its power to bring about a fruitful solution of the questions facing the United Nations at this time. It is the judgement of my country and my Government that this Assembly is one of greatest importance not only for the peace of the world, but for the continued successful operation of the United Nations, and certainly at this time, in this century. We in this room today represent governments pledged to the principles of the Charter, governments capable of decisions and actions which could change the course of human history. It is with a sense of both our opportunity and the dangers that will flow from failures to take advantage of this opportunity that I would like to discuss, at this start of the twentieth session of the General Assembly, some of the problems which I regard and my Government regards as being of uppermost consideration at the moment. So I