

Archbishop,

Distinguished delegates and guests

I am honoured that you would give me a few minutes of your time in the midst of what I understand is a full and highly productive meeting.

The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa is about to begin the fourth of our meetings - which have also been productive - and we expect to draw inspiration from you in two ways.

First, and most tangibly, we look forward to receiving your final report, and conveying it to the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth at their meeting in October in Kuala Lumpur. But more generally, you are creating an atmosphere of hope and preparation in southern Africa, helping equip the people of South Africa to make the most of the freedom they will win when apartheid is gone. Our immediate goal is to end that evil system, but the longer purpose is to help all South Africans create a durable society of equality and accomplishment. Education, and the development of skills, are at the heart of meeting that challenge. I am particularly proud of the leadership of Ted Scott and other Canadians in your essential work of building the skills and knowledge of black South Africans and, in a moment, I want to mention what the Canadian Government can do, and has done, to help.

But your work is being done in the context of the fight against apartheid. It is essential that we remain hard-headed and firm in the fight against that system. Without question, there have been real changes recently in southern Africa, most markedly in Namibia. There is also a promise of some change in South Africa itself. But within South Africa, that change is still a promise, not yet a reality. The policy challenge, for the Commonwealth and for its member countries, is to encourage any real process of reform, while, at the same time, maintaining relentless pressure against apartheid.

No one can predict what the next year will bring. But we can identify some of the factors that cause the promise of change. For example, we can say with certainty that one real cause of change in southern Africa has been the steady and determined pressure of the Commonwealth, including particularly the sanctions adopted in the last four years, and the ability of the Commonwealth to persuade other influential countries to adopt economic measures.

That pressure must continue, and it must continue to build, until there is clear proof that apartheid is being dismantled. That is the commitment of the Government of Canada. We are in this fight to bring an end to apartheid, and that will be a priority of our government until the battle is won.