

The linkages of debt, sustainable development, and common security are as profoundly complex as they are necessary. Even when the technical and economic means exist, and often they do not, the political and social policy challenges of change are immense. We note the conclusion of a recent analysis of Africa's desperate situation in the journal *Conflict Studies*:

There are many dimensions to the African debt crisis. It is not simply a question of inadequate policies or bad leadership in domestic politics. Nor is it solely a consequence of the declining terms of trade for Africa's primary commodity exports. The many proposals for African debt relief often fail to take in all the dimensions involved. Policy reform in the domestic arena is needed as well as initiatives. The only realistic strategy to deal with Africa's debt would combine an appreciation of all levels of the problem. Debt has undermined both the sovereignty and development efforts of many states, while allowing a corrupt few to enjoy life. The only realistic solution to Africa's debt crisis is a strategy which combines debt relief, further credit, a far more sensitive structural adjustment, and moves to encourage greater democracy within African societies.⁽³⁸⁾

We are not discouraged by the scope of the challenges we face as one world because the opportunities for change and reform are also great, and global necessity may be, as the saying goes, the mother of invention. **Ways must be found to convert some of the dividends of East-West peace into North-South cooperation, to convert countries' capacities for war into capacities for human development and conservation that add real security to our shared global environment. This Committee has been concerned in the past with promoting demilitarization and controlling the spread of the arms race in the Third World. We believe it is important that these aims be the object of increased Canadian efforts multilaterally and that they be reflected in our own policies.**

Changes to the multilateral system itself may also be required. **Canada should use its respected international position and influence to attempt to shape these changes. We should not resist imperatives to reform or be content to be a follower nation.** These are times to consider expanding the bases of North-South cooperation. Who, only a few years ago, would have anticipated the constructive proposals along these lines put forward by Soviet President Gorbachev before the United Nations General Assembly in 1988 and during the economic summit of G-7 countries in Paris last year? At the same time, developing countries are demanding a seat at the tables of the powerful where decisions are made that affect their health and security. **We believe that the debt crisis could serve as a catalyst for reforming the international machinery of coordination and institutions of economic cooperation.** As stated earlier, the Sub-Committee does not have a blueprint for a new global system. But we note, for example, the recommendation of the churches'

(38) Stephen P. Riley, "African Debt and Western Interests," *Conflict Studies*, No. 223, July 1989, p. 22.