

Affairs, and a strong defender of the United Nations, its principles, and its activities -- today announced the details of a major national process that will allow Canadians the opportunity to explore a new framework for living together in this country.

Crucial to this understanding is a statement of the values that unite all Canadians, including the recognition of Canada's language duality and of the fact that Quebec is a distinct society within Canada based on its unique language, culture and system of civil law. Other basic values include the equality between women and men, recognition of diverse cultures and their protection, and the objective of sustainable development.

These values will be entrenched in the Canadian Constitution in the so-called "Canada clause" and the distinctness of Quebec would be recognized here as well as in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

But the proposals presented today go far beyond basic principles and values. For example, we will be seeking ways to make government and the administration of government more effective. Canada, as does the rest of the world, faces a situation where elected representatives are expected to do more and more with a continually declining stock of public resources.

We will be seeking ways to eliminate overlaps and inefficiencies, and to introduce a modern logic into the allocation of responsibilities between various levels of government. We will be looking for ways to strengthen the economic union within Canada so that we are better placed to deal with the growing challenges of the international marketplace.

We will also be looking at the responsibilities of fundamental institutions such as our Senate, to ensure that they operate in a manner which ensures true representation of the people in the major decisions that affect their lives. I should point out that this is just the beginning of the process. A special joint committee of the House of Commons and Senate will be travelling across the country to hear Canadian views on what amounts to 28 different initiatives. It is no small task, but it is an important one for all Canadians.

Canada is a country that was founded on co-operation and compromise. It is in this spirit that we enter this new phase of our country's proud history; and it is in this spirit that I fully believe we will emerge from these discussions with a stronger and more unified Canada. And a stronger Canada means a stronger voice in the world community.

This is important as Canada, along with the other members of the United Nations, addresses the fundamental changes taking place in