

I am confident that a strong majority of Canadians will support this reform because it is based on fundamental values to which every Canadian subscribes:

- unswerving respect for the rights of the individual, supported by the rule of law;
- a strong and deep attachment to democracy, its values and its institutions;
- a passionate commitment to social justice and economic progress for all;
- respect for national and international obligations; and
- a will to resolve differences peacefully through conciliation, compromise and consensus.

As Canadians, we have learned that democracy and freedom can only be maintained by vision and constant vigilance. New ideas for the future must be grounded in the fundamentals that were the original basis for unity. As Prime Minister Brian Mulroney told Canadians: "What Canada's leaders have produced is a series of constitutional reforms that strengthen the bonds that brought us together in 1867. These reforms renew the concepts that are at the core of Confederation. They provide a strong framework, a solid foundation to let us move confidently into the future together."

A strong and united Canada is important for Canadians, but it is also of fundamental importance to the nations of the world. The values that Canadians hold, and have brought to the world throughout our first 125 years as a nation, are also the values that are fundamental to the Charter of this very organization.

It is our belief that we are not in need of better principles in this United Nations -- the drafters of the original Charter have served us well. What we need from this organization and its members is the will to act. We need deeper understanding of the root causes of conflict between nations, so that together we can "... break the chain of violence, defuse the lust for revenge, voice the peoples' needs and affirm the peoples' dignity," as our Prime Minister said in this Assembly on its fortieth anniversary.

I believe that the United Nations has taken up that challenge, and I salute the Secretary-General for his vision and leadership and for his courage in making this organization more relevant in and to our time. His report, "An Agenda for Peace," lights a path to the future.