

A great deal has been done over the past few years to help our multilateral institutions to effectively face these numerous challenges. However, we must admit that our institutions are still far from being ready.

Too often, the intervention of the United Nations comes too late, is too slow and is carried out under inadequate conditions.

The lack of political will on the part of the member states cannot be blamed on the Secretary-General. On the contrary, I would like to pay special tribute to the Secretary-General and his assistants, especially the new High Commissioner for Human Rights. They have done more and better than one is entitled to expect from a private institution with the most elementary resources, lacking even a solid financial foundation.

We must fully assume our responsibilities and give the UN the tools required to successfully fulfil its unique mandate. However, it seems that we are unable to collectively take a second look at the habits of the past.

We invest too much energy in activities of marginal use and in unimportant quarrels when there is an emergency right under our noses.

We waste valuable resources by allowing all sorts of institutions and agencies created over the years to jealously protect their independence and resist changes when the circumstances require a pooling of energies.

As a result of our extreme reticence to implement administrative reforms, we are handicapping the only institution on which we can depend when modern and flexible management methods would enable us to respond much more effectively to the needs of the hour.

Mr. Chairman, Canada asks that the reforms of the UN system be augmented and accelerated. We must do more and better with the resources at our disposal.

Efforts should be concentrated on the following five major priorities.

Firstly, we must strengthen the UN system's capacity for preventive action.

The UN already has a number of tools for detecting power struggles, and can use a variety of mechanisms to try to eliminate problems before crises break out. We are not at a loss for information, rather we need the ability to analyse, develop appropriate strategies and above all mobilize energy from all components of the system.