



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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INFORMATION DIVISION  
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## EIGHTEENTH SESSION: AN ASSEMBLY OF OPPORTUNITY

Statement by the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson,  
Prime Minister of Canada, in the General Debate at the  
Eighteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly,  
September 19, 1963.

I wish first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to the high office you now hold. As one who has himself occupied that Chair, I know that it is always demanding, often difficult and occasionally an uncomfortable one, but your record and your personal qualities assure us that you will fill it with satisfaction to the Assembly, distinction to yourself, and honour to your country.

Some years have passed since I last had the honour to represent my country at the United Nations. My first words on my return must be to re-affirm Canada's strong and continuing support for our world organization and our desire to do what we can to help realize the ideals of its Charter.

### Change and Growth of the United Nations

From this rostrum, I am happy to recognize many old friends and respected colleagues. But I am also conscious of the fact that the eighteenth session of the General Assembly of 1963 reflects the great changes that have taken place in the organization since I was here, and which in turn reflect changes that have taken place in the world. Not the least of these changes is the admission of many newly-independent states whose distinguished representatives now add their wisdom and influence to the Assembly's deliberations.

Their presence is a reminder, which we should not need, that there can be no enduring peace and security in the world until all men are free, with the right to determine their own form of political life and the duty to display the responsibility that alone gives meaning to freedom.

For 18 years now, the United Nations has continued the search for effective ways to promote the purposes and principles of its Charter. In the broad balance-sheet the credit column remains favourable, even if limited by international fears and misunderstandings. Our task remains -- as it has always been -- to reduce and ultimately sweep away those limitations.