

mass exoduses and effective functioning of treaty bodies on which Canada traditionally takes the lead.

We are all convinced of the connection between human rights and the need for more effective action on conflict prevention. Can we afford it? In my view, the real question is whether we can afford to look the other way until it is too late. The Worldwatch Institute, a research group based in Washington, has published a study to challenge this thinking. When the Rwanda crisis began, a \$115-million peacekeeping effort was viewed as too expensive. A few months later, the U.S. alone had pledged half a billion dollars to cope with the humanitarian disaster. Canada's own contribution has mounted to nearly \$70 million, including peacekeeping.

For these reasons, we will also continue our efforts to secure more resources for the UN Human Rights Program: one per cent of the UN regular budget is a dubious reflection of the priority given human rights by the Charter and is clearly inadequate to the real demands faced by the High Commissioner and the Geneva Centre for Human Rights. Of course, we must also improve the performance of the UN in this area and encourage greater co-ordination among the diverse human rights mechanisms throughout the United Nations system.

Similarly, as we prepare for the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in March and the World Conference on Women in Beijing in September, we must work to ensure that issues of women's equality are fully integrated throughout the UN system. At the Commission we will pursue our efforts to ensure that women's rights are incorporated into the broad range of human rights instruments and mechanisms.

You have already begun to discuss specific country situations. I know that in many of these cases you share my frustration with the politics and seemingly arcane procedures of the Commission. However, it is important to remember that, imperfect though the Commission may be, its deliberations and actions do carry the moral authority of the international community. The Commission is the pre-eminent forum for consideration of human rights situations around the world and for engaging governments in serious debates and negotiations on specific problems. This government believes that such multilateral channels generally offer more prospects for truly influencing government attitudes than do isolated bilateral actions.

Human rights is also fundamental to creating an environment for sustainable development, for only where men and women can actively participate on an equal basis in decision-making within their communities can real and lasting progress be achieved. We must not only continue to support human rights, good governance and democratic development in practical ways through our bilateral assistance policies, but encourage the integration of these priorities into multilateral programs. We must also support the