

But the problems are not insoluble. This is the fundamental message of the United Nations Program of Action for Africa itself. Through multilateral cooperation we can overcome what individually is impossible. Two years ago, under the leadership of the Secretary General, we mapped out together step-by-step the route towards recovery and growth. We knew what needed to be done and now we are in the process of doing it.

Significant steps have been taken both by African governments and by the international community. Some progress is evident but this has not had an impact on the larger picture - yet. Economic reforms, debt relief measures, new resource commitments all take time to make their impact. I have found in the Secretary General's report good reason to believe that in the coming years, more positive results will be seen.

Many African countries are now engaged in economic reforms and adjustment efforts. These governments have shown great courage and foresight in braving the short term social and political risks inherent in delivering new policies to remove barriers and distortions that have hindered healthy growth and the natural evolution of economies. There are risks, but the long term benefits more than outweigh the risks. Continued and increased vigilance is needed. But, it is especially during this difficult transition that African governments deserve - and, speaking for Canada, will receive - our full and unrelenting support.

Africa must define and drive her own recovery program, but it cannot be done without external support. Substantial resource flows are needed to make it possible to implement necessary policy reforms. And significant relief from the heavy debt burden crippling the poorest countries in Africa is also needed.

The international community has been far from idle during the two years of the Program of Action. The Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility of the IMF has been operational since April 1988: Under the ESAF, a total of 7.5 billion dollars in additional concessional financing will be made available to the poorest countries. In addition, a total of 6 billion dollars has been pledged by bilateral donors to support structural adjustment programs with the World Bank. Donor coordination has been strengthened, building upon the Bank's consultative group mechanism. The African Development Fund has been increased by 50 per cent and IDA 8 has been generously replenished.