

reports, together with the reports of the Brandt Commission and Commonwealth experts have highlighted so strongly in their projections for the 1980s that it is the poorer countries, particularly the least developed, who are most vulnerable and have the bleakest prospects.

As my Prime Minister recently stated in Nairobi, "without the largest infusions of assistance from outside their borders, the world's poorest countries cannot hope to overcome the poverty of their people within the foreseeable future." In this context, Canada announced a year ago at the 11th Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly that we would be increasing our official development assistance (ODA). We pledged ourselves to attain 0.5% of GNP by 1985 and we are now working towards that objective. In addition, we pledged our best efforts to reach by 1990 the International Development Strategy (IDS) target of 0.7% of GNP.

It has been a long-standing principle of Canadian aid policy to emphasize assistance to the poorest countries. More than 75% of Canadian bilateral aid is currently allocated to low-income countries. Of this amount, over one-third of bilateral Canadian ODA was allocated to the least-developed countries in 1980. This assistance is well distributed among the least-developed countries in all parts of the world. We fully expect that this principle of concentration will be maintained in the years ahead. Furthermore, as overall levels of Canadian development assistance increase throughout the decade in line with my government's commitment, to which I have referred, the volume of aid to the least-developed countries will increase in real terms.

Consistent with this policy, Canada attaches great importance to the role of the multilateral organizations and international financial institutions. Strong support to these institutions by all of their members is, in our view, a key to the success of any long-term plan for the least-developed countries. My government is pledged to continue to provide such support.

My country has been giving careful consideration to the development needs of the least-developed countries and other countries in the 1980s and to relating those needs to Canada's capacities. The country review meetings which preceded this conference were of interest to us in this context. It is, of course, extremely difficult to determine priorities among so many compelling needs. At the same time, it is not realistically possible for resources to be found to respond to every need. Development resources have