

construction of a renewed region where, 10 years hence, no one would consider himself or herself a refugee. We are providing substantial financial assistance to the Palestinian people's reconstruction projects. We would favourably consider the sending of peacekeepers if the need should arise, thereby perpetuating a lengthy tradition of Canadian participation in the region's peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chairman, the economic and social problems facing the international community often receive less headline attention than the armed conflicts. However, they are every bit as urgent.

Hundreds of millions of people around the world continue to be destined for a life of poverty. For whole sectors of humanity, such basic needs as a proper diet, drinking water, education and medical care are more of a dream than a reality.

Certain parts of the developing world are currently experiencing remarkable advancement, while others, particularly the African continent, are sinking deeper into misery and despair.

It is estimated that there are an unprecedented 19 million refugees and displaced persons in the world. We are witnessing a massive movement of people that none of our societies is able to manage without the co-operation of the entire international community.

The recent Cairo conference revealed the urgent need for effective measures to cope with the problems of population and development, problems that cannot be resolved without giving full recognition to the essential role of women.

Our ability to translate into reality the concept of sustainable development will have a direct impact on the daily lives of our fellow citizens.

The fishermen of Newfoundland and the Maritime provinces of Canada are all too familiar with this problem: their livelihood has disappeared through the plundering of fish stocks in international waters off our shores. I would like an agreement to be reached without delay on fishing on the high seas. After all, it is not just a matter of the loss of a lifestyle in a region in my country, but also the loss of a non-renewable natural resource.

Mr. Chairman, we could easily add to the list of pressing problems that I have just mentioned. And no one can challenge the fact that all of these problems — from peacekeeping to development, including the fight against AIDS, drug trafficking, the protection of human rights and the environment — require a determined, co-ordinated effort on the part of the international community.