

middle powers which focuses on North-South relations. To the extent that these opportunities give us increased insight into the interests of developed and developing countries alike, we are able, I believe, to play on occasion a valuable "bridge-builder" role. This role was underlined by the recent report of the Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations which stated that "Canada should help build bridges between North and South. There is no message which we consider more important to convey to those who read our report."

This is in fact an extension into the North/South area of a long-standing role of Canadian diplomacy in the tradition of St. Laurent, Pearson, and Martin.

I have spoken about what we, Canada, can do in assisting the poorest countries. However, multilateral agreements, universally determined, remain fundamental to Canada's approach to finding effective solutions to global problems. There is no substitute for such a multilateral approach; and such an approach is, in my view, embodied in the proposal for holding "global negotiations". A large degree of consensus has been achieved on the launching of the global negotiations which are intended to deal with major issues in the field of raw materials, energy, trade, development, money and finance.

It's important that these negotiations be launched and that they succeed. There are, of course, many different perceptions of what success represents and how it will be defined. Considerable compromise on all sides will be necessary to reach agreement on procedures and agenda. I remain hopeful that the international community will respond positively to the challenge.

If one looks back at the agenda over the past few months, a certain positive momentum has built up. The UN (United Nations) Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, the Conference on the Least-Developed Countries recently held in Paris, and the Ottawa Summit have all served to move things in a positive direction characterized by what I would like to call -- in a cautiously optimistic way -- a new realism. On the other hand, there has undeniably been a hesitancy on the part of certain important developed and developing countries to enter fully into this process. But there has of late been less rhetoric on all sides, and a more business-like attitude. The Cancun