

I assure you -- we approach this with no scales on our eyes and only after thorough analysis, particularly by our military.

Another very serious consideration, as we look at the future of peacekeeping, is cost. The price tag for Canada's assessed contributions to the UN has grown sharply from \$8 million to almost \$90 million annually -- in other words, more than a tenfold increase in a few short years.

Add to that the costs associated with maintaining several thousand troops in various missions abroad, as well as the costs, for example, of civilians acting as electoral observers and the costs of the RCMP in various peace operations, and the price tag is even higher.

But, there is more.

Peacekeeping costs are like icebergs -- the costs for soldiers and supplies are only the tip, while under the surface is a whole other range of costs. For example, even the most modest contribution of troops abroad must be backed up logistically and otherwise by resources at home.

Clearly, whether future peacekeeping missions are fully funded or not, our financial obligations are growing and will continue to grow. We are already bumping up against resource ceilings for our involvement in missions.

Our financial constraints force us to think hard about the reasons we are involved, and the objectives we want to achieve. Other difficult questions also present themselves.

Is there a pay-back to Canada for shouldering our fair burden -- and more -- of the costs of peace and security? Should there be? Does our involvement serve broader national interests? What are they?

These questions lead us into other areas that reflect the changing needs and requirements of each new peace mission -- needs very much associated with the human dimension of each operation.

As the Prime Minister remarked at Harvard University in December, "There is a need to bolster the capacity of the United Nations to respond to humanitarian and political emergencies."

Fundamentally, we cannot lose sight of the fact that international initiatives to restore and maintain peace and stability must take into account and respond to the desperation and suffering of the individuals who find themselves trapped in an area of conflict.