

The influence of the cultural and educational sectors on our economy is profound. These sectors hold a good deal of potential for Canada, a potential that we must take advantage of. The Government is committed to defending the competitiveness of our cultural industries and of the educational products and services of our universities and colleges, and to helping our artists penetrate foreign markets. To say that we have limited resources is no excuse for abdicating our responsibilities. On the contrary, it is an opportunity to consolidate our efforts and work with other departments and agencies to promote our culture and knowledge abroad.

Vitality in our cultural, academic and scientific interchange is essential to our success in the new knowledge-based world economy; it is also essential to our growth, prosperity and success nationally. In order to remain competitive, our institutions of higher learning, our students, our future workers need to adapt to a profoundly and constantly changing international labour market, to expose themselves to the new technologies, and to master new knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, Canadians know that our problems are insignificant compared to the intolerable situation in which too many of the assistance world's people still live. Official development aid is another important and integral part of our foreign policy, for it strikes at the very roots of conflict and of threats to security. Aid reflects the values of Canadians - values of compassion, co-operation and generosity.

In the Statement we are tabling today, the Government firmly intends to clarify the mandate of CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency], in order to give it a solid objective and clear priorities that will dictate the action it takes. These priorities are six in number:

- to address basic human needs;
- to support the participation of women in sustainable economic development;
- to provide infrastructure services;
- to defend human rights;
- to encourage the private sector; and
- to protect the environment.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that these objectives support the three main principles of foreign policy that I have just announced, namely the promotion of prosperity, of our security, and of our values.

The Government will encourage and help Canadians to participate in co-operative development, and will take measures to improve the effectiveness of the official development aid program.