

contribution to the UN are known and honoured across Canada, he was not the first Canadian to distinguish himself in the service of peace and the United Nations.

The first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was written by a Canadian, the late John Humphrey. And his contribution to the UN did not end there.

For nearly 20 years, John Humphrey devoted himself to applying and promoting the principles set out in the Declaration of Human Rights, first while working at the United Nations Secretariat and then teaching at McGill University. Indeed, does not the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reflect the thought of Kant? Kant tells us in his essay that "the rights of man must be held sacred." Is this not the Declaration's underlying principle?

John Humphrey's work inspired many Canadians and others in their efforts to entrench fundamental human rights. The Platform for Action recently adopted by the UN's World Conference on Women in Beijing bears witness to these efforts, as do the documents that came out of the Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the Copenhagen Conference on Human and Social Development.

The name of a Canadian is closely associated with another United Nations Conference, the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment held in 1972 in response to the threats to the environment which were already evident at that time. Maurice Strong was asked to chair the Conference and subsequently became the first Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program. His talent and dedication did not go unnoticed: 20 years later, the UN asked Maurice Strong to chair the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

The tremendous progress humanity has made over the past 50 years, particularly in the area of human development, is due in large part to the work of UN specialized agencies. I am thinking in particular of the World Health Organization, created in 1948, whose first Director General was Canada's then Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Brock Chisholm.

All these Canadians shared a common objective, a very simple one indeed: to build a better world by putting into practice the Charter of the United Nations, which expresses the desire of the peoples of the world to strive for the advancement of humanity. This same objective drives the many Canadian peacekeepers serving with the UN around the world today.

Canada in the Service of the United Nations

The process of reflection of which I have spoken should not be confined to honouring the work of the past. We must be sensitive to the criticisms being levelled at the UN and we must be