

A month from now, when the UN General Assembly begins, Canada's top priority will be to work with partners, such as the United States, to encourage a serious and determined process of reform. Prime Minister Campbell made that case forcefully at the G-7 Summit in Tokyo, and the final communiqué reflected the leaders' understanding that progress is needed now.

The United Nations needs more than fine-tuning. We need fundamental improvements in the way it is structured and operates.

Today, the international community is being called upon to intervene in a multitude of localized or regional conflicts caused by ethnic or religious hostility, famine and the abuse of human rights.

We find ourselves struggling to cope with new demands, new expectations and new challenges, equipped with tools designed for another age and other purposes. In these circumstances, we must not allow ourselves to become discouraged or disaffected. Instead, we must be more determined than ever to give ourselves late-20th-century tools for late-20th-century problems.

The UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace is an excellent road map. Isn't it time that we stopped just reading the map and took some bold steps down the road toward a more effective UN? Steps, for example, in areas such as peacekeeping, peacemaking, enforcement, preventive diplomacy or peacebuilding?

Take, for example, the case of mandates that are given to UN peacekeeping missions. At times, these mandates have been unclear and imprecise. At times, the scope of the mandate has not been matched by the resources provided to the mission.

When UN missions are established, they must have clear and precise mandates, they must be given the authority they need to deal promptly and effectively with situations as they develop in the field, and they must be given the resources they need to get the job done.

We also need to change the culture of peacekeeping -- the fundamental concepts and attitudes underlying our approach. Too many people still think of peacekeeping as an exclusively military operation, with soldiers in blue berets keeping former combatants apart.

So much more is involved today. So much more is needed today.

For example, civilians are playing an increasingly important role in missions to restore peace. Cambodia is a case in point. Soldiers aren't the only ones on the front lines. There are also legal experts, medical personnel, and specialists in the area of