

When the Prime Minister and other Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Vancouver and Lake Okanagan in October, they agreed on measures to fight apartheid in South Africa, and established a committee of Foreign Ministers to give impetus to their decisions. I have the honour to chair that committee, and rise to report to the House on its first meeting, earlier this week, in Lusaka, Zambia. In beginning, I want to express formally Canada's great appreciation of the excellent arrangements made by the Government of Zambia.

The Committee comprises the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Guyana, India, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. At Vancouver, the United Kingdom decided not to be a member of the committee, although Britain is contributing to other parts of the Commonwealth program against apartheid. For example, Britain and Canada will be the major contributors to the restoration of the second phase of the Limpopo Rail Line in Mozambique. Britain, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Malawi are involved in the equally important work of providing security for transportation corridors against terrorist disruption.

The best prospect for an end to apartheid is the negotiating concept developed by the Eminent Persons Group, established by the Prime Minister and other Commonwealth Leaders in Nassau. Our committee will work consciously to encourage conditions where that negotiating concept might be given effect.

Mr. Speaker let me refer to the campaign to defend apartheid. It is systematic, organized, prosecuted as a priority by the Government of South Africa, and supported, for various motives, by businesses and organizations with substantial interests in that country. Among some within South Africa, the resistance to change is intensified by fear, including the fear that they will be torn up from their own roots, and that the strong economy they have created will be destroyed. That combination of power and fear is formidable, both in itself, and in the reaction it inspires.