

We also pledged to make available immediately \$50 million dollars of aid funds to assist some of the most seriously distressed countries. This total sum has been fully committed to the provision of fertilizers and food aid shipments are now being made. We are deeply aware that measures of this kind are but the first steps on a long road. This conference is a further step down that road to improving the economic well-being of the developing world. I think this conference must concentrate on the basic long-term priorities, the increase in food production, the improvement of nutrition, and the advance of rural development. This conference is concerned with efforts to improve the lives of the rural poor who represent some 40 percent of the total population of developing countries -- about 750 million persons. Canadian efforts will concentrate on increasing the productivity of rural people by enhancing the means of production at their disposal.

To help meet demands of this magnitude we have been engaged in Canada in developing a new broad strategy for Canadian development assistance which is now in its final stages. It is intended to provide among other things new guidelines which should result in a greater capacity to respond to the changing priorities of developing countries.

In addition, other policies of government which affect Canada's relations with developing countries are also being re-examined with a view to ensuring a consistent approach to the development of a stable and equitable world economic environment.

Within the broad dimensions of this strategy, we have been re-assessing our development assistance programmes in order to enlarge them and make them more effective in the renewable resources sector. Through our bilateral and multi-lateral aid programmes we have been involved in a wide range of activities in this sector -- for example, the provision of fertilizer, research in dryland farming, water resource evaluation, the development of wheat farming and beef and dairy projects, and the development of storage and bulk handling facilities. We can extend also our activities in fisheries and forestry.