

We also know that no one country or group of countries can remedy these serious problems by itself.

More than ever, our world needs strong, credible multilateral institutions capable of meeting the hopes, so high and yet so simple, of mankind. Mr. Director General, you may be assured of Canada's willingness to help the FAO, like the other components of the UN system, to face the challenges confronting it.

As Canadians, we can be proud of our country's unique contribution toward building the UN system. The UN has been, and will continue to be, the cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy. We support it because it represents values we cherish: co-operation, sharing, peace and justice.

Of course, we are not unaware of its weaknesses and shortcomings. But we are taking pains to remedy them. If the international community is responding favourably to our call to reform the UN, it is because it sees Canada as one of its most faithful servants and staunchest defenders. Our voice has been and will continue to be heard, because our participation in all the UN's peace missions has earned us the respect of the international community. Nor can we forget that the concept of peacekeeping operations originated with the vision of Lester B. Pearson, the man we are honouring today.

Although there was no reference to peacekeeping in the United Nations Charter, Pearson proposed that the UN undertake such operations for the first time in 1956, during the Suez Crisis. This earned him the Nobel Peace Prize.

We also know that the only way of successfully facing the challenges before the world, such as securing a food supply and protecting agricultural and natural resources, is to share our strengths and our successes with the peoples of the world. We stand only to learn more by doing so.

Canada has long been a leader in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, and we believe that sharing this knowledge is essential.

For this reason, we are pleased with the fact that, in addition to the FAO ministerial meeting, Quebec City will also host the FAO Symposium, bringing together more than 1000 representatives from governments, the private sector, the NGOs [non-governmental organizations] and academia.

Among those present are representatives from well-known Canadian and Quebec institutions such as Desjardins International Development, McGill University, Laval University and the University of Montreal. We also have the Fédération des Producteurs de bois du Québec, among many others. The expertise