

In the land we used to know as Burma, Canadians deplore the regression of the democratic process. We call on the Government of Myanmar to release all political prisoners, to convene the National Assembly at an early date and to proceed promptly to end the systematic and forced oppression of the Myanmar people.

Ironically, as individual nations of the world strive to strengthen their own democratic functions, we are addressing an international agenda replete with issues calling for changes to our traditional ideas about the sovereignty of states.

The world is becoming more closely interconnected. We are witnessing unprecedented flows of people, goods, services and aid between countries. But these activities are only productive in a world with a strong foundation of confidence, collective security and individual freedom.

Out of the tragic after-effects of the Gulf War has emerged an important principle. And that is, the international community must respond to delinquent states who cause other nations to suffer. And more and more frequently, responsibility to people suffering within nations faces the international community. In other words, we are increasingly, in the international community, our brothers' and our sisters' keeper.

The struggle against political terrorism, territorial aggression and illicit drugs and our efforts to promote arms control are similar in that they affect our universal security and well-being. In that same sense, too, the problems of our common natural environment are a multilateral responsibility.

This broader concept of security and stability requires new thinking and calls for multidimensional solutions.

For example, we, all of us, are stewards of the world's resources -- our air, water, land and trees. We must accept that responsibility together and find multilateral solutions to the terrifying problems of the environment we all face.

We must also work together and individually towards broader economic equality. Within our national and regional boundaries, all sectors of society must be ensured of opportunity, of hope.

I believe that Canada's approach to co-operative security reflects this expanded definition -- as amply demonstrated by our actions in the Asia Pacific region. We see the potential to ensure Asia Pacific security in the expansion of dialogue which improves the opportunities for reducing tensions.

Many of you know that the ongoing Asia Pacific consultative framework is a key objective of Canadian foreign policy.