

As the first Canadian Prime Minister to address an IAPA Convention, I want first to acknowledge the Association's historic role in the promotion and the defence of a free press throughout the hemisphere.

From the time of your foundation, more than 35 years ago, you have stood resolutely and courageously for this fundamental democratic tenet.

Some of your reporters have paid and continue to pay for their convictions with their lives. I pay tribute to your colleague Jose Carrasco Tapia who was brutally murdered in Santiago on the night of September 7.

You are, in a very real sense, the sentinels of freedom. As your own charter States, in a timeless declaration: "without freedom of the press, there is no democracy."

Throughout the hemisphere, you have outwitted and outlasted anti-democratic regimes on the right and on the left. It is in no small measure due to your courage and commitment that in the Americas, democracy is again ascendant.

Tancredo Neves observed after his election as President of Brazil: "There is nothing more noble than a nation that has the strength to reconstruct its own freedom."

Democracy and development -- that's what I want to discuss with you today from a Canadian perspective.

We have pursued a coherent and consistent policy of constructive internationalism.